

116

OFFICIAL BRITISH PROPAGANDA IN ALLIED AND
NEUTRAL COUNTRIES DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR
PARTICULAR
WITH ~~SPECIAL~~ REFERENCE TO ORGANISATION AND
METHODS

by

Michael Lewis Sanders

Thesis submitted to
the degree of Master
of Philosophy,
University of London,
1972.

UMI Number: U382731

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI U382731

Published by ProQuest LLC 2014. Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

27.10.87



R
F4337

27.10.87

List of Contents

Abstract	page 3
List of Abbreviations	page 4
Chapter 1 - Introduction - Propaganda before the First World War	page 5
Chapter 2 - From Propaganda Bureau to Ministry of Information	page 16
Chapter 3 - Propaganda: Distribution and Methods	page 81
Chapter 4 - The Content of Official Propaganda .	page 125
Chapter 5 - British Propaganda in Allied and Neutral Countries 1914-18: A Reappraisal	page 149
Bibliography	page 178

Abstract

The thesis consists of five chapters, including an introduction and conclusion, and a bibliography.

Chapter 1 is an introduction and examines some of the attempts made by the British government before the First World War to influence public opinion. The argument is that though various efforts were made to direct domestic opinion, no systematic attempt was aimed at influencing foreign opinion.

Chapter 2 describes the organisations set up by the British government to run propaganda, beginning with the propaganda bureau at Wellington House in 1914 and culminating in the creation of the Ministry of Information in 1918. It examines critically the Donald reports which were the basis for the restructuring of organisation that took place. Finally, the quarrel between the Foreign Office and the new Ministry of Information is described.

Chapter 3 examines the various ways in which propaganda was distributed abroad and the various methods employed to present it. The effects of organisational changes on methods are considered.

Chapter 4 analyses the content of pamphlet propaganda, with particular reference to themes, the proportion of pamphlets devoted to them and the changes of emphasis that occurred during the war. A special section is devoted to atrocity propaganda. Also examined, are pamphleteers and their influence on content, and pictorial propaganda.

Chapter 5 concludes that the achievements of Wellington House have been greatly underestimated and that too much attention has been concentrated upon the Ministry of Information. An attempt is made to explain this and to evaluate the work of the earlier propaganda organisations. The attitudes of politicians towards propaganda and of established government departments towards the new propaganda organisations are considered. It is observed that propaganda was held in low repute after the war but that propaganda nevertheless became an indispensable part of our foreign service.

List of Abbreviations

<u>Hansard</u>	- <u>Hansard's Parliamentary Debates</u>
F.O.	- Foreign Office Papers
P.R.O.	- Public Record Office
Inf.4	- Ministry of Information papers, 1914-18 War
Cab.	- Cabinet Papers
L.G. papers	- Lloyd George Papers
Bbk. Lib.	- Beaverbrook Library
Bbk. papers	- Beaverbrook papers
I.W.M.	- Imperial War Museum

Chapter 1 - Introduction - Propaganda before the First World War

Propaganda has been defined as 'the deliberate attempt by some individual or group to form, control or alter the attitudes of other groups by the use of instruments of communication with the intention that in any given situation the reaction of those so influenced will be that desired by the propagandist.'¹ Definitions are inevitably vague and by the terms of the above definition, advertising must count as a form of propaganda, or may be more precisely termed economic propaganda.² The historian is less concerned, however, with fixing a definition than he is with conceptual clarification, that is with an examination of the ways in which the word 'propaganda' has been variously used in the past, through which he may arrive at an understanding of its meaning. That we have always employed a different word for economic propaganda suggests that when we normally speak of propaganda we have in mind a process which excludes the notion of advertising wares in order to sell them. Propaganda has to do with politics, with the dissemination of opinions and principles by governments either amongst the indigenous population or amongst foreign peoples. Bodies other than governments may wish to spread certain ideas with the intention of persuading public opinion, but unless their aims are specifically political, we tend to call this activity a publicity campaign.

The origin of the use of the word 'propaganda' in the sense of a campaign of persuasion appears to have been in the 17th century. In 1622 Pope Gregory XV created a body for the more effective propagation of the Catholic faith, the Sacra Congregatio Christianae Nomini Propaganda, more commonly known as the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide. The main aim of such an institution was to spread religious ideas and any link it may have had with the politics of civil governments can only

-
1. T.H. Qualter, *The Nature of Propaganda and its Functions in Democratic Government: An Examination of the Principal Theories of Propaganda since 1880*, Ph.D. thesis (London, 1956), abstract.
 2. Lindley Fraser, *Propaganda* (London, 1957), p.1.

have been indirect. The term propaganda, in the sense of a campaign of political persuasion adopted by a government, does not appear to have been at all widely used until the 19th century, when an increased awareness of the possibilities of its methods was occasioned by the growth of public opinion as a vital political consideration. This development was most evident in Britain where, against the background of industrialisation, the channels of communication were broadening through the improvements in transport and the expansion of the press. Technological innovation made this possible. Until 1814 all newspapers were printed on hand-operated machinery. The maximum rate of production was 250 sheets per hour. On 29 November 1914, The Times newspaper was printed on the first steam press at the rate of 1100 sheets per hour.¹ At the same time, newspapers were rescued from dependency on Treasury subsidies through the increase in circulation and the increased availability of advertising space, for which there was a growing demand as the economy expanded. Newspapers improved their facilities, especially the gathering of news which, in the case of The Times, became more efficient than that of the government, by 1815 according to Lord Liverpool and by 1834 according to The Times.²

Government interest in the press intensified. The methods of propaganda were not new to a government in the 19th century. Examples of propagandist activities by governments may be found throughout history. Such examples are, however, isolated and sporadic, their potential effect greatly limited because the channels of communication were so narrow. Propaganda tended to be localised, being most effective in an urban setting, spreading little beyond town boundaries. Even in these circumstances, there was a steady expansion of the British press, notably in the early 18th century and with the improvement of roads in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and the emergence of the railways after 1830, followed by the development of the telegraph, the whole process was greatly accelerated. Though illiteracy persisted into the 19th century, and only a fraction of the population read the newspapers that were printed, their expansion

1. A. Aspinall, Politics and the Press c.1780-1850 (London, 1949), p.7.
 2. Aspinall, p.379.

was nevertheless, remarkable. Between 1840 and 1852, the circulation of The Times rose from 10,000 to 40,000 copies per issue.¹ The contents of such papers were also passed on through local newspapers and even by word of mouth. Politicians were fully aware of this new and important trend. Palmerston especially, and Canning before him, stressed the importance of public opinion which they both saw as a tremendous force of the future in politics.² Their interest was in the instruction of the indigenous population, in domestic propaganda. Political activists such as David Urquhart demonstrated how to conduct a propaganda campaign and how effective it might be.³ The newspaper became an indispensable feature of party politics and no government could afford to ignore their potential influence on opinion, especially after the 1st Reform Act of 1832. By the last quarter of the century, political scientists were already expressing their fear of large-scale manipulation of opinion, a feeling that became intensified with the coming of the 2nd Reform Act in 1867 and Forster's Education Act in 1870. Moreover, the abolition of taxes on newspapers, advertisements and paper between 1855 and 1861 had made still further expansion of the press possible, opening the way for the 'penny populars'. The liberal conscience grew fearful of the emotions of the 'mob' which might so easily be swayed and the prospect of the tyranny of the majority gave them much cause for alarm. Their very concern was an indication of the extent of domestic propaganda.

Inevitably, interest in propaganda was related to the influencing of domestic opinion. As yet, the possibilities of affecting public opinion in other countries had not been profoundly explored. The need for propaganda abroad seemed much less pressing. It usually required some form of international crisis before governments became urgently concerned about opinion abroad. The extra-European emphasis of British foreign policy in the 19th century resulted in a readiness by the British government to rely mostly upon

-
1. Kingsley Martin, The Triumph of Lord Palmerston: A Study of Public Opinion in England before the Crimean War (London, 1963, new and revised edition), p.82.
 2. H. Nicolson, Diplomacy (London, 1963), P.73 & p.97.
 3. J.H.Gleason, The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain: a study of interaction of policy and opinion (Cambridge, Mass., 1950), p.190 ff.

diplomatic exchange in order to establish satisfactory relations with other European countries.

Other nations, however, showed a more positive attitude towards mass opinion outside their own state, Germany being a particular example. A newly united nation in 1871, Germany was experiencing a rush of growth at the base of which was an industrial revolution. The wealth and power that industrialisation brought Germany sought immediate outlets in economic and territorial expansion, as well as in the establishment of Germany as a great power in Europe. Bismarck made the Germans very self-conscious of their potential role in the world and because they were seeking to expand so rapidly, it was important that other countries should be brought to accept this desire for recognition as a great power. This called for concentrated activity aimed at cultivating relations with other countries, both European and extra-European, with a view to increased trade as well as to increased security. Bismarck led the way in this respect by paying very close attention to the press. He appointed a special press agent, Moritz Busch, whose task it was to control the press as far as possible on behalf of the government, so that Germany always showed a united front. One area of concentrated German activity was South America, where, by the beginning of the 20th century, German businessmen were eagerly seeking to expand trade and were taking on the role of propagandists, explaining German aims in her foreign policy.

The British Foreign Office correspondence of the time reveals an awareness of this propaganda. The Foreign Office knew well the methods and potential application of propaganda, but were less concerned to exploit them, or to imitate the Germans. Where foreign relations were concerned, the Foreign Office were reluctant to use the press as an informing and influencing medium. This applied both to the British press and the foreign press. The Foreign Office preferred to rely upon diplomatic relations as their means for the supplying of information to foreign countries. Attempts to influence foreign opinion through articles placed in their native press were rare and usually based upon individual initiative.

Equally, the Foreign Office steered clear of the British popular press where foreign relations were concerned. It looked with distaste upon the 'gutter press' which was expanding rapidly in the 1890s. In 1896 the Kruger telegram roused press campaigns of intense bitterness in both Germany and Britain, so bitter that Queen Victoria urged Lord Salisbury to mitigate the violence of the British campaign. This was difficult as no official channels of communication were open. The press were not invited to the Foreign Office, not issued with communiques or invited to explain or support British foreign policy. Only one leading minister of the time appears to have desired a reversal of that policy, Joseph Chamberlain. In Birmingham, Chamberlain had worked closely with William Harris of The Birmingham Daily Post and had never forgotten the value of newspaper publicity. When Chamberlain was appointed to the Colonial Office in 1895, he made that office a ready source of information in contrast to the Foreign Office: 'There was no other Government Department at that time where a journalist was so certain of obtaining accurate and authentic information from a responsible official.'¹ The journalist would be seen by one of the heads of department, or by one of the private secretaries if the issue was one in which 'Jo' was personally interested. The Foreign Office was, however, very forbidding. A journalist often waited a long time for information and in the end received none. Yet Chamberlain appears to have been instrumental in persuading Salisbury of the use of the press in developing public support and Salisbury was willing to be persuaded in 1898 when the Fashoda crisis broke: 'For the first time Fleet Street was invited to the Foreign Office.'² Lord Sanderson, the permanent under-secretary, welcomed the press a half-hour after the cabinet meeting which discussed the crisis. The barriers appeared to be down, but while the Colonial Office under Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, Chamberlain's successor, went on to develop a press agency system whereby, for the first time in any office, a special official was deputed to see all newspaper representatives, the Foreign Office returned to its exclusive ways, of unofficial and informal contact. In the period 1898-1914, 'the servants

1. Kennedy Jones, Fleet Street and Downing Street (London, 1919), p. 95.

2. Kennedy Jones, p. 97.

of the Foreign Office had little doubt that diplomacy - "the art of the possible" - ought to be conducted by a professional elite in an arena well removed from the vagaries of political amateurism and public debate.¹

Moreover, the apparent relaxation of Foreign Office attitudes towards the press during the Fashoda crisis is misleading. The concern of the Foreign Office to give details of their policy was a reflection of their desire to obtain public support in their own country. Very few journalists from abroad were afforded the same facilities as those from Britain, and once the crisis subsided, the British press soon found the Foreign Office less flexible. However, contacts had been made and some were retained. Sanderson continued to handle relations with the press, received editors and on occasions intervened with The Times to moderate its anti-Russian or anti-German tone, since this might embarrass diplomatic relations. He also saw a Reuter's agent regularly, and not only gave him items of news, but answered any questions he thought useful. Nevertheless, 'as there was no press secretary or press bureau, all of these conversations were highly informal and Sanderson did not go out of his way to cultivate good relations with Fleet Street.'² Foreign journalists were at an even greater disadvantage.

Sir Edward Grey, during his period as Foreign Secretary, did nothing to alter this. Contact with the press was maintained through his private secretary Sir William Tyrell, whose task it was to keep in touch with leading journalists, convey information to them and to explain Grey's policy. In addition, there were numerous close relationships between leading newspapermen and foreign office personnel. Cecil Spring-Rice communicated regularly with Leo Maxse of The National Review, St. Lee Strachey of The Spectator and Valentine Chirol, foreign news editor of The Times until 1912.³ Arthur Nicolson maintained close liaison with W.B.Harris, The Times correspondent in Morocco, whilst Sir Edward Goschen communicated regularly with

-
1. Zara S. Steiner, The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898-1914 (Cambridge, 1969) preface, p. x.
 2. Zara S. Steiner, p. 36.
 3. Cron. J. Hale. Publicity and Diplomacy with special reference to England and Germany 1890-1914 (Virginia, 1940), p.38.

Wickham Steed in Vienna. The Foreign Office read closely the reports sent out by The Times correspondent in the Far East, G.E. Morison, as his information preceded and was superior to that of their own agents.¹ There were other journalists who had great political significance such as H.A. Gwynne of The Morning Post who was a power in the Conservative Party, and J.A. Spender, editor of The Westminster Gazette, who was very influential in the Liberal Party.² But the significance of all this may be exaggerated. Spender, himself, testified that when The Westminster Gazette was quoted abroad between the years 1906 and 1914, there was almost invariably placed after it in brackets, 'the organ of Sir Edward Grey', but Spender maintained that in the ten years that Grey was foreign minister he never suggested to him that he should write an article in The Westminster Gazette, or even proposed that he should take one line rather than another in foreign affairs.³

Both before and during Grey's term of office (until 1914), the Foreign Office were not concerned to develop foreign propaganda. During the Boer War, when Britain was isolated in the face of hostile world opinion, no organized campaign of propaganda was undertaken in the United States.⁴ In November 1899, the British ambassador in Madrid, C.F. Frederick Adam wrote to the Marquess of Salisbury:

Although since the outbreak of war in South Africa the Press in this country has been more than ever full of false reports and scurrilous insinuations respecting Great Britain, I have not thought it worthwhile to trouble your Lordship with specimens of these effusions, which are best treated with good humoured contempt.⁵

A similar attitude was recorded by Sir Charles Scott, the British ambassador at St. Petersburg, four years later in May

1. Zara S. Steiner, p.190.

2. Cron J. Hale, p.8.

3. J.A. Spender, A Life in Journalism and Politics, 2 vols. (New York, 1927), cited in S. Bishop, The Administration of British Foreign Relations (Syracuse, 1961), p.191.

4. J.H. Ferguson, American Diplomacy and the Boer War (Philadelphia, 1939), p.176.

5. G.P. Cooch and R.S. Temperley, Documents on the Origin of the War 1898-1914 (London, 1927), vol.1, no.298, p.241.

1903, when he reported to the Marquess of Lansdowne his conversation with Count Langsdorff:

I said that it was certainly very disagreeable to be constantly the subject of odious and unjust charges in the public press and we could sympathise with him, as during the late war in South Africa, there appeared to be no charge or suspicion too monstrous to be credited against our Government and troops by the foreign press, and the only thing to be done was to remain calm and hope that time would do justice. 1

This state of affairs, whereby the Foreign Office felt no need to transmit a constant flow of information explaining the opinions and attitudes of the British Government and the principles behind its actions, continued until the commencement of war in 1914. It was, in part, the reflection of a foreign policy which had consistently avoided entangling alliances. Although the Boer War and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance which followed are said to have marked a significant change in British foreign policy, the change does not appear to have been fundamental. The ententes with first France and then Russia before 1914 were understandings and no more. Britain continued to rely upon the Empire as the main outlet for trade. The last flourish of economic prosperity before the First World War, from 1907-1914, was based upon trade with India. Imperial trade obscured the effects of competition from Germany and the United States. In this situation, propaganda seemed hardly relevant. The paternalistic attitude adopted towards the peoples of the Empire left little room for justification. When trouble occurred in the Empire, as it had in South Africa, the British had complete control of all lines of communication to South Africa, a control the navy could maintain without too much difficulty. Thus all the information that came out of Africa could be dictated by the British government. Foreign countries were left to speculate as to what was happening.

The long-standing British commitment to Empire had meant, and still did in 1914, that there existed in Britain a strong

1. Gooch and Temperley, Vol.2, No.231, p.203.

sense of isolation from Europe, an isolation that was both political and economic. Commercial links with countries outside the Empire do not appear to have been considered important enough to necessitate the defence of political actions taken by the British government, or perhaps it was believed that economic relations were established according to a logic peculiar to that sphere and that they were not affected by political logic. Thus, before 1914, no attempt was made to create any organisation through which information relating to British foreign policy might be released for foreign consumption. Grey made the position of the Foreign Office quite clear in a statement to the House of Commons in 1911:

Certain representatives, newspapers and press agencies receive any communications with regard to foreign affairs which are suitable for publication. Such information is, for the most part, confined to appointments and changes in His Majesty's Diplomatic Service. If enquiries are made at the Foreign Office with regard to specific facts, they are answered when it is possible to do so without prejudice to public or private interests... There is no regular organization in connexion with the Foreign Office for inspiring any press agency or newspaper in order to put forward, either officially or semi-officially the views of His Majesty's Government with regard to foreign affairs. ¹

Such an attitude was not without its critics and the Royal Commission on the Civil Service, which met from 29 April to 18 July 1914, cast serious doubt upon the wisdom of Foreign Office policy.² The commission investigated the Foreign Office diplomatic and consular services. The most frequent criticism heard before the Commission, was the lack of proper publicity and press information from Foreign Office sources. British Foreign Office officials were charged with being less energetic and active than those of Germany and France. Thus the Foreign Office was being criticised not only for failing to set up an efficient press bureau to which both British and foreign journalists might come for regular information on British policy, but also for failing, through its various foreign diplomatic representatives, to study and influence the foreign

1. 3 Nov. 1911, Hansard, 5th ser., CXXXIII. 564.

2. Ezra S. Steiner, p.167.

press. R.J. Bruce, a British diplomat in Vienna, testified to the Commission that most diplomats were engaged in secretarial work, 'we just did the work which came along, decyphered telegrams when they came, and had an occasional busy day, mostly when the Foreign Office bag arrived.'¹ After the war, G.B. Beak, the vice-consul in Zurich, commented:

Before the war representatives of Great Britain abroad - namely the Diplomatic and Consular Service - were not encouraged to take any very great interest in the Press of the countries to which they were accredited. Reports were for the most part spasmodic and dealt with only the more extraordinary articles which happened to appear. Practically no attempt was made in any effective manner to influence the foreign press in our favour. 2

This view of Beak is perhaps exaggerated to the extent that it is hard to believe that no attention was paid to the foreign press by British representatives abroad. There are no doubt numerous examples of British ambassadors and consuls studying the press of the country in which they represented the British government. On their own initiative, many must have sought to exert some influence through the local press by passing information to it or by seeking to place in the newspapers articles which reflected British views and policy. However, Beak does reveal an important truth. Clearly there were no set instructions to diplomats to study and use the foreign press. Nor was there any systematic attempt to influence the foreign press through the institution of a press bureau which would receive foreign journalists and provide them with a regular source of information concerning the policy of the British government.

1914 found Britain ill-prepared to fight a European war and equally ill-equipped to conduct any kind of propaganda campaign that might grow out of it. Countries in which there had been little or no English influence before, political, economic or cultural, represented a formidable problem if they were to be penetrated and persuaded by a British propaganda campaign. A war-time report illustrates the problem. In August 1917, a report was issued following an enquiry into "The

1. cited in Zara S. Steiner, p.175

2. memorandum, 2 Dec. 1918, F.O. 395/301, P.R.O.

Circulation of British Books, Periodicals and other similar means of communication in foreign countries.' Under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Newbolt, the committee found that the lack of adequate circulation of English writings had 'seriously affected foreign appreciation of British thoughts, ideals and efficiency; and that the results of this lack of appreciation have operated in many directions to the detriment alike of British policy and of British trade.'¹ These conditions were common to most countries. In Sweden, German literature swamped our own as the result of very powerful educational and trade links between the Germans and the Swedes. In Russia, it was found that there was a lack of English books compared with German text books which were very common. In Holland, the report observed that there was a complete lack of appreciation of the achievements of British science. The situation was very much the same in France and Switzerland, while in Italy, the British ambassador in Rome, Sir James Rennell Rodd, noted that English books were costly, being bound in or cased in boards which were subject to an import duty, and that orders for British books took a long time to come through.² German booksellers, on the other hand, fulfilled orders promptly and economically, working through the Leipzig book-selling market. They had taken full advantage before the war of opportunities to spread their influence and trade. Diplomacy, business, education, all were spheres through which German influence had spread.

Though the findings of this particular report were not available to the British cabinet in 1914, they were fully aware for how little British economic and cultural influence counted in Europe, and elsewhere outside the Empire. Equally, they were aware of how highly developed German propaganda was. The advent of war was to present the problem in an altogether new light.

-
1. Report of a Departmental Committee of the Department of Information, INF. 4/5, P.R.O.
 2. Sir James Rennell Rodd, Social and Diplomatic Memories, 3rd series, 1902-1919 (London, 1925), p.309.

Chapter 2 - From Propaganda Bureau to Ministry of Information

'German preparedness for the eventuality of war was revealed by the amount of literature with which offices and agencies in Italy were immediately inundated.'¹ The same was true elsewhere as German propaganda was spread far and wide; posters, leaflets, pamphlets were poured out in an attempt to explain Germany's entry into the war and also with the intention of discrediting the motives of the allies. The British government was greatly disturbed by the virulence of the German campaign, which was specially directed towards the United States of America, the most important of the neutral countries. At the end of August 1914, the matter was raised in the cabinet: 'Mr. Lloyd George urged the importance of setting on foot an organisation to inform and influence public opinion abroad and to confute German mis-statements and sophistries.'² On 5 September 1914 the cabinet decided that steps were to be taken without delay to counteract the dissemination by Germany of false news abroad. Though there had been no peace-time precedent the cabinet accepted the need for an organisation to coordinate the systematic influencing of foreign opinion for the duration of the war. The well-known liberal writer and politician, C.F.G. Masterman, Head of the Insurance Commission³ and, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, a member of the cabinet, was asked to take the matter in hand.

Masterman was given the task of placing before the population of neutral countries and the Dominions, the case of Great Britain in entering the war and the justification of policy decisions as they were adopted during the war. He had no special qualifications for this kind of work, save that of his experience both as a writer and as a journalist.⁴ His first act, therefore, was to organise two conferences, the first of prominent literary figures and the second of publicists and representatives of the press, in an attempt to establish on what principles propaganda might be based and by what

1. Rennell Rodd, p.215.

2. Herbert Asquith to the King, 31 Aug. 1914, Cab. 41/35/38, P.R.

3. The Insurance Commission was established in Dec. 1911 to supervise the carrying out of the terms of 1911 National Health Insurance Act. Masterman's official position was 'Chairman' and he received no extra salary for holding it.

4. His most noted book was The Condition of England (London, 1909) and he had written for The Daily News, Independent Review, The Pilot, The Nation and The Daily Chronicle.

methods best implemented.

The two conferences met on 2 September and 7 September 1914 and were attended by a most impressive list of notable writers.¹ However, little of constructive value was likely to result from such a gathering of various opinion. The conferences discussed only a variety of ideas and observations about particular countries and their problems. None of those attending either conference had any experience of the kind of propaganda campaign that would be necessary and so had nothing very useful to offer in the way of advice. Nevertheless, some progress was made. A number of writers offered their services as pamphleteers and it was established that there were four main groups of countries to be influenced: the U.S.A., and Italy; Holland, Scandinavia and Denmark; Spain, South America, the Dominions and India; Rumania and Bulgaria. The groupings were deliberate. It was important that both the USA and Italy remained neutral and there was a chance that both might enter the war on the side of the British and the French. Holland, Scandinavia and Denmark would be strictly neutral and it was important that they remained so and did not fall under German dominance. Spain, South America and the Empire were in a different situation, the first two important commercially, while the latter already committed to the war, was no less significant in trading terms. Rumania and Bulgaria were likely to enter the war soon and therefore, it was necessary to make immediate overtures to them.

With these preliminary arrangements complete, Masterman then set about the creation of a propaganda bureau.

The propaganda bureau was set up in the block of flats in Buckingham Gate known as Wellington House, which had previously been occupied by the National Insurance Commission.

1. Notable authors and other literary figures at the first conference included J.M. Barrie, Arnold Bennet, Robert Bridges, G.K. Chesterton, Conan Doyle, John Galsworthy, Thomas Hardy, John Masefield, Gilbert Murray, G.M. Trevelyan and H.G. Wells. Notable representatives of the press at the second conference included Sir E.T. Cook, Robert Donald (The Daily Chronicle), J.L. Garvin, (Pall Mall Gazette), Sydney Low (The Standard), Geoffrey Robinson (The Times), J.A. Spender (Westminster Gazette), J. St. Loe Strachey (The Spectator), and A.S. Watt, the literary agent.

Many of the officials who had worked under Masterman there before the war turned to propaganda work and for the next two years, Wellington House was the main centre of British propaganda organisation, working very effectively in secret so that even parliament was largely ignorant of its existence and work. Masterman chose Sir Claud Schuster¹ as his chief executive officer and E.A. Gowers as his general manager. Work in the bureau was separated on a linguistic basis: one section dealt with the Scandinavian countries, another with Holland, another with Italy and Switzerland, another Spain, Portugal and Latin America. The United States was the concern of 'a most important special branch'² headed by Sir Gilbert Parker, M.P., a Canadian by birth.³ In addition to the various people detailed to concentrate upon one particular country or group of countries,⁴ there was a literary adviser, A.H. Hawkins,⁵ a literary agent, A.S. Watt, and a liaison officer with the Intelligence Departments of the Admiralty and the War Office, Edwyn Bevan,⁶ whose special task it was to research into and make a study of the German press. His liaison with the various intelligence departments was to be mainly with reference to the research into the press of other countries. Mr. J.S. Willmore, of the Consular service, was employed to make a special study of the French press and was in charge of translation from French into English. The department also had the specialised advice of academics such as J.W. Headlam,⁷ Arnold Toynbee⁸ and L.B. Namier.⁹ All of the personnel mentioned were in attendance at Wellington House where daily conferences were held at which major decisions

-
1. Claud Schuster (Baron), 1869-1959, official in Nat. Ins. Commis., apptd. to serve Lord Chancellor, July 1915.
 2. 1st report of the work of Wellington House, 7 June 1915, p.1, INF. 4/5, P.R.O.
 3. Sir (Horatio) Gilbert (George) Parker, 1862-1932, a Canadian novelist, M.P. for Gravesend, 1900-1918.
 4. these included two Insurance Office officials, Mr. Alexander Gray, and Mr. Percy Koppel.
 5. Anthony Hope Hawkins, 1863-1933, famous novelist, worked at Wellington House 1914-18 and knighted for his services.
 6. Edwyn Bevan, 1870-1943, scholar, historian, philosopher and publicist. Joined Artist's Rifles 1914, but transferred to propaganda work. Joined Political Intelligence Department 1918.
 7. Sir James Wycliffe Headlam-Morley, 1863-1929, historian, adviser to Wellington House on all historical matters, 1914-17.
 8. Arnold Toynbee, b.1889, noted historian. Transferred alongside Headlam-Morley to Political Intelligence Department, 1918.
 9. Sir Lewis Bernstein Namier, 1888-1960, historian, entered Royal Fusiliers 1914, attached to Foreign Office 1915-20.

relating to matters of policy were made. The committee responsible for policy was known as 'the moot' and it was usually presided over by Mastermen.¹

In addition to the process for decision taking, a method of work was established for each department. It first had to study the foreign press and keep in touch with the trend of public opinion in the country with which they were dealing. Secondly, it was to translate and publish any matter likely to have a favourable effect on that opinion, by arranging for something to be specially written, or by using material already available, or by circulating speeches and official documents. Thirdly it was to deal directly with individuals, sending them information or receiving reports from them, or, especially in the case of America, encouraging the press correspondents in England and any distinguished visitors in the country, 'to take a right view of the actions of the British government since the commencement of the war'.² At intervals, special representatives were sent to various countries abroad to report on the condition of public opinion and to recommend the most satisfactory methods of dealing with any dissatisfaction with or opposition to British policy.

From its inception, the principle which guided Wellington House and was the basis of Masterman's view of propaganda, was that of the truth: 'We have determined to present facts and general arguments based upon facts.'³ German methods were to be avoided at all costs, that is to say anything which resembled a mass publicity campaign. Strict secrecy was to be observed with regard to any connexion with the government as otherwise suspicion would be aroused as to whether the motives which led to the production of the material were ones that genuinely sought the truth. Thus recipients of propaganda were to receive it from unofficial sources. A general principle

-
1. there is a photograph of 'the moot' in session in Lucy Masterman, C.F.G. Masterman: a biography (London, 1939), facing p.304.
 2. 1st report Wellington House, 7 June 1915, p.2, INF.4/5, P.R.O.
 3. 1st report Wellington House, 7 June 1915, p.2, INF.4/5, P.R.O.

was established that there should be a definite nexus between sender and recipient, thus avoiding any impersonal or wholesale distribution. The sender was to select literature suitable to the recipient and to send an accompanying note. 'More especially is this true of America where much of the work has consisted in undoing the harm which has been done by those who have rushed impulsively to lecture the United States on her duty in the war.'¹

Amateur propagandists were in abundance. The activities of voluntary organisations were both useful and a problem to Wellington House. Masterman testified that there was an unconscious growth of work directing, co-ordinating and often restraining the propagandist intentions of private enthusiasts.² There were various voluntary organisations, most important including Oxford University, the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, the Cobden Club (of pre-war origin), the Fight for Right Movement, the Anglican Clerics, the United Workers, the Atlantic Union, the Overseas Club, the Victoria League, and the most noted, the Central Committee for National Patriotic Organisation.³ Their immediate usefulness lay in their value as distributing agencies on the personal basis that Wellington House had laid down. However, they were not readily inclined to accept the passive role that such a relationship with Wellington House implied. A more positive role was sought. The Committee for National Patriotic Organisations had as its president, the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, and as its vice-presidents Lord Rosebery and A.J. Balfour. The chairman of this organisation, Henry Cust,⁴ was very interested in the issue of propaganda and proposed various schemes of propaganda in neutral countries. This was to be expected, considering the credentials of the honorary officials

1. 1st report Wellington House, 7 June 1915, p.3, IMF.4/5, P.R.O.

2. *Idem*.

3. James Duane Squires, British Propaganda at Home and in The United States from 1914 to 1917 (Cambridge, Mass., 1935), p.16 ff.

4. Henry John Cockayne Cust, 1861-1917, politician and journalist, one time editor of The Pall Mall Gazette.

of the organisation and taking into account that so far as Cust knew, no propaganda work at all had been undertaken by the British government, since Wellington House was working deliberately in secret. His proposals, however, greatly alarmed the Foreign Office and their reaction to his ideas was expressed by Hubert Montgomery¹ of the News Department:

Sir Edward Grey is anxious that we should not appear in any way to emulate what had been described as the 'orgy of second-rate publicity' in which the Germans have indulged, and which, by their admission, has not been a success. You will have noticed in Saturday's Times that the Americans appreciate our attitude of restraint in this respect and there is a good deal of evidence that the same feeling prevails in other countries. 2

Cust defended his schemes, arguing that they would deliberately avoid the 'governmental touch', that they were to be based on personal contact between friend and friend, and all literature would be distributed in personal mail, a scheme which fitted entirely with that of the bureau of propaganda. Schuster, at Wellington House, welcomed such plans providing they remained closely under his supervision and that it was the material issued by his department that was generally used. Cust, however, was not satisfied, complaining that material from Wellington House was very slow to be issued. He also complained that though he had been warned not to send material to the U.S.A., he was receiving many letters asking for literature, and suggested that they were 'entirely unadvised and uncontrolled at present. They have no indications of the wishes of the Foreign Office which has indeed given little utterance to its desires on these points and is therefore, perhaps unduly, if naturally, blamed at home and abroad.'³ On these grounds, Cust sought official authorization which would give his organization independence, but this the Foreign Office would not grant. The names associated with the organisation would have immediately connected their propaganda with the British government and that was precisely what Grey

-
1. Charles Hubert Montgomery, précis writer to Secretary of State and Assistant Clerk, Foreign Office, 1915, leading official of the News Dept. until 1918.
 2. Montgomery to Cust, 23 Nov. 1914, F.O. 371/2207, P.R.O.
 3. Cust to Grey, 12 Dec. 1914, F.O. 371/2207, P.R.O.

wished to avoid, that any propaganda should appear to be official. Moreover, Cust was considered to be most unreliable and indiscreet. He had told a Danish journalist that the 'government deals with articles in the foreign Press'; he had requested a pamphlet from Sir Ernest Barker¹ on the subject of Britain's reasons for going to war, a pamphlet that would be published in Italy and which, Cust stated in a telegram intercepted by Schuster, was for 'official' use.² Eventually in March 1915, following Schuster's complaints, a letter was issued from 10 Downing Street to the effect that Cust should restrict the activities of his organisation to the British Empire. Cust, of course, was not finished, and the Foreign Office had to keep a close watch on him and his other ideas, preventing lecture tours³ and any other form of propaganda which suggested barnstorming methods and which had not been closely vetted by the Foreign Office.

The first report from Wellington House to the cabinet was issued in June 1915. In February 1916 came the second report and evidence of the considerable expansion that had taken place. Masterman wrote that since the previous report, 'our propaganda work has greatly increased in volume and the kind of work we have been doing has also, in part, changed with the lengthening period of the war. Fresh methods have been and are being developed in order to preserve interest and counteract forces which are doing injury to the cause of the Allies.'⁴ The staff now totalled thirty-six, which included eleven clerks and seven typists. E.A. Gowers had been promoted from general manager to chief executive following Sir Claud Schuster's appointment as Clerk of the Crown in July 1915, but the latter remained as an official adviser. Sir Gilbert Parker continued as director of propaganda in the United States, assisted by Arnold Toynbee. The department dealing with Holland was also given responsibility for getting propaganda material into Germany itself, though

1. fellow and tutor of New College Oxford, 1913-20.

2. Schuster to Bonham-Carter, 16 Dec. 1914, F.O. 371/2207, P.R.O.

3. On 2 Aug. 1915, Lord Robert Cecil wrote to Cust warning against a proposed lecture tour by a Cust appointee, F.O. 371/2561, P.R.O.

4. 2nd report Wellington House, Feb. 1916, p.4, INF.4/5, P.R.O.

this was outside the original brief of Wellington House. L.B. Namier was now specifically denoted as reader and reporter of Austrian papers and adviser on Polish and Austrian affairs. A new department appeared to control propaganda in Moslem countries while there was also a new section to direct pictorial propaganda. The bureau also paid much closer attention since May 1915 to the feeling of Britain's allies, sending out material which demonstrated British determination to see the war through and showing how much effort was being put into the war by the British people, which the allies appeared to doubt. Propaganda amongst the allies was also outside the original brief of Wellington House but became essential as allied relations grew strained.

The third report on the work of Wellington House, which was issued on 3 September 1916, confirmed still further expansion.¹ The pictorial propaganda department had a larger staff owing to its increased activities while a separate cinematograph department had been created. Muirhead Bone² was listed as official war artist at the front and an Intelligence Branch consisting of three members, which now played an important role in the general work of the bureau. Propaganda work had grown in intensity and complexity and so had the organisation to deal with it.

Wellington House, however, was not the only organisation set up by the government to deal with propaganda; there were two others, the News Department of the Foreign Office and the Neutral Press Committee.

The function of the Neutral Press Committee, as suggested by its title, was to supply the press of neutral countries with all the relevant information relating to the war. G.H. Mair was appointed head of the new committee on 23 September 1914 and set up office at Whitehall House, being answerable to the Home Secretary, R. McKenna. Mair soon developed his work into four main divisions: the exchange of news services between Britain and foreign newspapers; the promotion of the

1. F.O. 371/2837, P.R.O.

2. Sir Muirhead Bone, 1876-1953, Scottish painter.

sale of British newspapers abroad; the dissemination of news articles; and the transmission of news by telegraph. On his own initiative, Mair developed British wireless from October 1914, a foreign press summary from February 1915, the provision of facilities for foreign journalists and a press articles service. The exchange of news between newspapers was limited to the wealthiest, namely those which could afford London correspondents. Countries such as Switzerland, Spain, Central and South America and the Balkan States were outside the scope of these arrangements, and in their case the development of wireless was most important if the country could be reached, or the telegraph was the obvious medium for the transmission of news. Thus the Marconi wireless service was used to transmit some of the news intended for Spain. America, however, was too far distant for regular and reliable wireless transmission, as wireless development was only in its elementary stages, and therefore reliance was placed upon the cable for the rapid sending of information. The Balkans were impossible to reach directly by either. An important principle that was fundamental to Mair's work was that foreign journalists should transmit their own articles, having been entertained and supplied with information by the relevant government department. This method was especially favoured with Italian and American journalists. The reading and translation of the foreign press was a particularly important aspect of the work of the Neutral Press Committee. The circulation of articles and information sent out by the committee could be traced, and at the same time a great deal of evidence was supplied relating to public opinion abroad and the kind of assault the Germans were carrying out in neutral countries with the written word. This kind of information enabled a sophisticated counter-propaganda campaign to be developed. Mair's committee was not the only office to examine the foreign press. The Admiralty, the War Office, the Trade Clearing House and Wellington House all made summaries of their own. Some overlapping was inevitable, though this was avoided to some extent by the foreign papers being divided amongst them according to their special interest, though all of them read the German newspapers.

The Foreign Office News Department had similar functions

to those of Mair's committee. The Foreign Office was the source for the foreign press of all statements concerning British foreign policy and they were therefore received there and given regular statements by the News Department. As the war progressed, this department, in cooperation with the War Office, took to the organisation of visits to the Western Front. But the original and obvious significance of the Foreign Office had been in connexion with its representatives abroad, the immediate and natural choices as agents of foreign propaganda. The Foreign Office sent daily messages to all H.M. Representatives at foreign capitals, with instructions to repeat to Consular officers in other towns, telegrams containing all news of importance, naval, military and political, as soon as it became available, along with details of the more mischievous German fabrications. General telegrams were sent every evening by wireless and cable, containing interesting news of the day. Copies of propaganda publications were sent out for comment and, if deemed acceptable by the representative concerned, were sent out in large numbers for distribution. The News Department supervised the contract with Reuters, which involved regular transmissions of government inspired messages over the various cable links of the world. A watchful eye was kept by the Department on all movements of people in and out of the country who might affect propaganda issues. The scope of the work of the Foreign Office News Department, however, was not as wide as might have been expected. The explanation of this is that the News Department had control of press censorship with a view to the prevention of publication of comment and opinion likely to be prejudicial to our foreign relations. The powers of action of the Foreign Office were not clear, however, as the Attorney General had ruled that opinion and deduction were not within the scope of the term 'mischief' as defined by the Defence of the Realm Act.¹ Lord Robert Cecil² felt that censorship did more harm than good in that it gave the press an exaggerated sense of importance.³ The Press Bureau⁴ viewed the alternative

-
1. Lord Robert Cecil, memorandum on censorship, 16 Oct. 1915, F.O. 371/2577, P.R.O.
 2. Robert Cecil, Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, 1964-1958, Under-Secretary of State 1916, Minister of Blockade 1916-18.
 3. Cecil memo., 16 Oct. 1915, F.O. 371/2577, P.R.O.
 4. established 7 Aug. 1914 to censor press and to issue information to press from various Departments of State.

situation, where censorship would be left more and more to the discretion of the individual newspaper, as distasteful, but the Foreign Office eventually decided to accept Cecil's conclusions. In October 1915, the Foreign Office rid itself of all its censorship functions enabling it, in Cecil's own words, to concentrate on 'what ought to be, I think, our chief work, namely propaganda'.¹ Once free of censorship responsibilities, the Foreign Office News Department could concentrate on the supply of information to foreign correspondents and, more important, upon liaison with other departments concerning propaganda in general. The surrender of censorship responsibilities released time and personnel, enabling a rationalisation of propaganda organisation.

The need for such a readjustment was already apparent. The existence of three organisations charged with task of conducting official British propaganda raised three main problems: that of coordination between themselves; that of their relationship with the Foreign Office; and that of their relationships with other governmental departments. A situation whereby three independent organisations were engaged in supplying news or presenting the British point of view to neutral countries was bound to lead to anomalies and there was a serious danger of contradiction in the various material put out. That this state of affairs was unsatisfactory was suggested in a memorandum issued by the War Office,² probably the work of General Cockerill.³ The memorandum called for a rationalisation of the structure. It was suggested that all three organisations should be under one head responsible to one department, the natural choice being the Foreign Office. An inter-departmental conference was suggested, involving the Foreign Office, the War Office, the Admiralty, the Home Office, the India Office and the Colonial Office, which would be given the task of arranging for reorganisation.

The reaction of the Foreign Office was not very favourable at first. Hubert Montgomery commented 'experience of

1. minute, 22 Dec. 1915, F.O. 371/2579, P.R.O.

2. 10 Dec. 1915, F.O. 371/2579, P.R.O.

3. Director of Military Intelligence at the War Office.

committee work since the beginning of the war, has been one of indecision and delay'.¹ Montgomery had in mind the experience of Mair as head of the Neutral Press Committee. Originally Mair had been responsible to a committee that included Robert Donald, Lord Riddell, Sir Edward Cook, F.E. Smith and C.F.G. Masterman. The committee hardly ever met and no effective working relationship between Mair and the committee was ever established. The committee was too large and was replaced by a smaller committee which had as its members Sir Edward Cook again, Professor Oman, Schuster, Gowers and Montgomery. This met daily at first and later twice weekly at the Press Bureau. This proved no more successful in working with Mair and also broke up. Mair was then made responsible to the Home Office. The Foreign Office, therefore, was not unaware of the problem of coordination but did not consider any kind of overall committee control as an acceptable solution. The differentiation of the functions of each of the various propaganda departments as envisaged by the War Office, was considered to be an exaggeration by the Foreign Office. The News Department was a part of the Foreign Office. Mair had always worked in close harmony with Wellington House, since Masterman was a member of Mair's first advisory committee and Schuster and Gowers were both members of the second, with Montgomery representing the News Department. Admittedly these committees had collapsed, but even when under the Home Office, Mair still maintained daily consultation with the other organisations. The links between Wellington House and the Foreign Office News Department were still stronger. Schuster pointed out that Wellington House was not 'an independent organisation if that means it pursues its own course without consultation with or direction from other authorities'.² Wellington House maintained daily contact with the Foreign Office and Schuster considered his department to be virtually under Foreign Office control. The Foreign Office confirmed this. In April 1916 when writing to J.C.T. Vaughan, counsellor of the embassy at Madrid, Montgomery informed him that with regard to Wellington House, 'the Foreign Office is

1. minute, 14 Dec. 1915, F.O. 371/2579, P.R.O.

2. Schuster to Sir Edward Troup at the Home Office, 14 Dec. 1915, F.O. 371/2579, P.R.O.

kept informed of all that they do,¹ though he recognised that it was not possible to supervise all the communications they sent out simply on grounds of practicality. As this situation existed, Wellington House was very hostile towards the memorandum and its proposals. Schuster found it 'sickening' that 'after pursuing a policy of deliberate obstruction for about seventeen months' the Admiralty and the War Office should be complaining and putting forward their own proposals for improving propaganda organisations.² The Foreign Office were equally resentful of War Office interference. Their reaction to the proposals in the memorandum was a sign of the sensitive relations that existed between the two ministries, particularly since the commencement of war. To the Home Office, the Foreign Office showed a different front. Before the appearance of the War Office memorandum, Grey had already suggested to Sir John Simon, the Home Secretary,³ that all the various propaganda organisations should come under the direction of the parliamentary under-secretary of state for foreign affairs. Simon agreed with this and suggested official talks which would lead to Mair being brought more under Foreign Office control. Though this could have been arranged between the two ministries alone, the Foreign Office decided to accept the idea of an inter-departmental conference:

You will remember that you said the other day that you thought it would be useful, before the question of Mair's office being put definitely under Foreign Office control was settled, to hold the inter-departmental conference which had been previously suggested.

We find that there are many drawbacks to the existing arrangement, and the resulting lack of coordination prevents our doing as much as we should like to do. 4

A conference was convened, therefore, on 26 January 1916. Those attending the conference were Herbert Samuel, Sir Edward Troup and Mr. Brace from the Home Office, Cecil and Montgomery from the Foreign Office, Sir Reginald Brade and General Cockerill from the War Office, Sir Graham Greene from

1. 5 April 1916, F.O. 395/2826, P.R.O.

2. Schuster to Montgomery, 13 Dec. 1915, F.O. 395/2579, P.R.O.

3. Sir John Simon, 1873-1954, attorney general 1913-15, home secretary 1915-16.

4. Robert Cecil to Herbert Samuel, 21 Jan. 1916, F.O. 395/2833, P.R.O.

the Admiralty, Lord Islington from the Trade Office, Mr. Macnaghton from the Colonial Office, Sir Edward Cook, head of the Press Bureau, G.H. Mair, Masterman, Schuster and Gowers. The War Office representatives took the lead in suggesting reorganisation along the lines laid down in their memorandum of the previous month, stressing the idea of an Advisory Committee, made up of the various heads of departments, to advise on matters of principle. Regular liaison was proposed between the propaganda organisations and the Admiralty and the War Office. Sir Graham Greene proposed that Wellington House and the Neutral Press Committee be amalgamated. In order to stress what might be achieved, the War Office gave the example of the Maison de la Presse, which was the French propaganda organisation. It was completely contained in one building, with a top floor photographic department, a second floor press cutting department, a first floor reception area for foreign pressmen and a ground floor club for the same. General Cockerill praised the French organisation as being a very efficient one, though he did point out that the French government made no systematic attempt to influence neutral opinion. Masterman expressed immediate opposition to the advisory committee and called for more information before any decision was taken.¹ For the Home Office, Herbert Samuel suggested that it relinquish any responsibilities with reference to propaganda and that the Foreign Office should run the entire organisation of propaganda.

Most of the suggestions of the conference were adopted. Two days after the conference, Cecil issued a memorandum which made it clear that the Foreign Office would be assuming control of propaganda. In order to increase the flow of information, the memorandum requested that all departments who would be in constant touch with the News Department of the Foreign Office, should appoint a liaison officer whose duty it would be to obtain and supply that department with any information from his own department and with any contradictions of German statements that could be properly and usefully telegraphed or sent abroad in other ways. The Foreign Office was prepared to reciprocate the supply of

1. minutes of conference, F.O. 395/2833, P.R.O.

information. Distribution of material would be ensured by Mair's department, which was to be fully absorbed within the Foreign Office News Department, and by Wellington House which would come under the direct control of the Foreign Office.¹

The reorganisation was welcomed without reservation by everyone except Masterman:

I don't like to send an official, wholehearted support of it without making some reservations so that I may be quite clear as to the future of this office.

We have, as you know, acted in close unity with the Foreign Office for more than a year ... So long as we can work with you and Montgomery and also can take the initiative ourselves in matters which do not affect diplomatic relationships, we are in, what I think, is the best situation for this particular kind of work. 2

Masterman gave expression to a general fear at Wellington House, that outside influence might penetrate the Foreign Office and destroy the Wellington House method of propagandism. There was also the fear of unnecessary delay, either through the need to send all proposals to an advisory committee for consideration and approval, or through the News Department which would mean the denial to Wellington House of direct access to various departments other than the Foreign Office. Masterman believed the existing arrangements to have been adequate and gave the example of a speech by Grey that had been made in the House of Commons a few days before he had written of his reactions to the reorganisation proposals. Wellington House, on the same morning as the speech was given, had requested permission of the News Department to reproduce the speech and within ten minutes received an affirmative reply. Within a further ten minutes, the Government Printing Office had commenced the printing of the speech. The example was a rare and carefully selected one, but the point Masterman was trying to make was no less valid, that reorganisation was not going to be of value if it increased the machinery for decision-making, instead of streamlining the whole process. Masterman, however, could do little but

1. 28 Jan. 1916, F.O. 395/2833, P.R.O.

2. Masterman to Cecil, 31 Jan. 1916, F.O. 395/2833, P.R.O.

express his doubts and then acquiesce in the scheme:

If, however, we may understand that our relationships continue as they have happily done up till now, that we take on any work which your department wants us to do, and that we report to you any work we undertake, which may in the least degree affect diplomatic matters - then I am wholeheartedly on the side of your scheme. 1

By the spring of 1916 the process of reorganisation was complete. All the departments represented at the conference had appointed their liaison officers: Sir Douglas Brownrigg, their chief censor, for the Admiralty; Lieutenant Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband for the India Office; T.C. Macnaghton for the Colonial Office; H.F. Carlill for the Board of Trade and W. Sutherland for the Ministry of Munitions (he was also one of Lloyd George's private secretaries). The War Office were in the process of forming a new branch to deal with the Press but later appointed G.T. Davies as their liaison officer. The Neutral Press Committee had been duly absorbed within the News Department and Wellington House was now directly answerable and responsible to the Foreign Office. On 16 May 1916, the Foreign Office issued its policy statement as the department responsible for propaganda in allied and neutral countries. The main endeavour was to be to supply the public of those countries, through the press and other channels, with as much information as possible in order to convince 'neutral countries of the strength of the Allies' position, the justice of their cause and the certainty of their ultimate success, and of making clear to Allied Countries the part played by the British Empire in the war and the extent of its contribution to the common cause'.²

The assumption by the Foreign Office of control of all matters relating to propaganda did nothing to mitigate criticisms of its methods, content and organisation which came from a variety of individual commentators, the Press and other government departments, notably the War Office. Further changes were soon to be under consideration.

1. Masterman to Cecil, 31 Jan. 1916, F.O. 395/2833, P.R.O.

2. F.O. 395/2833, P.R.O.

The advent to power of David Lloyd George in December 1916 initiated fundamental change in the organisation and administration of government. The more efficient running of the war was the theme of this transformation which involved a wholesale process of rationalisation. The alterations that occurred in the organisation of propaganda during the last two years of the war were a vivid example of particular change.

Lloyd George wasted no time in focussing attention upon propaganda. He had helped bring into being the bureau at Wellington House and had shown throughout his life a close interest in the press and methods of publicity. The newspaper with which he was most closely associated was The Daily Chronicle and it was its editor, Robert Donald,¹ another who had shown consistent interest in propaganda and who had been a member of the advisory committee to Mair, to whom Lloyd George wrote wishing that he 'would go into the question of our present propaganda arrangements and let me have your views on the subject soon'.²

Donald did report soon, on 9 January 1917, eight days after Lloyd George's request, in his 'Report on Propaganda Arrangements and Recommendations'.³ He prefaced his report with some general remarks on propaganda, recognising that it had to be carried on not openly as the German system was, but on lines which would conceal its official character in neutral countries. He stressed the need to keep the peace terms in view by maintaining unity of opinion amongst the Allies through the rapid exchange of news and views. Not surprisingly, the role of the press was greatly emphasised by Donald. Where the influencing and nursing of public opinion in neutral countries were concerned, he believed that they should be effected through the permeation of the native press. The fundamental principles of journalism were to be applied. Donald insisted that any propaganda campaign should be

-
1. Robert Donald, 1860-1933, editor of Daily Chronicle, 1902-18. He resigned when the paper was purchased by Lloyd George - see A.J.P. Taylor, English History 1914-1945 (London, 1965), p.118.
 2. Lloyd George to Donald, 1 Jan. 1917, INF. 4/4B, P.R.O.
 3. INF. 4/4B, P.R.O.

offensive rather than defensive with the emphasis upon being first with the news and by paying close attention to atrocity propaganda which should be presented in popular, narrative form.¹ With this brief introductory survey complete, Donald then set about systematic criticism of propaganda arrangements in scathing terms.

'The condition into which publicity and propaganda work has drifted at the present time is due to the casual way in which it originated and to the promiscuous way it has expanded.'² The lack of any kind of official propaganda organisation before the war had meant 'the system was started without any policy having been defined, or any clear conception arrived at about the way propaganda should be carried on.'³ Donald recognised the initial problems that faced the officials responsible, but considered two years to have been ample time during which such problems should have been overcome and propaganda put on a proper footing. To illustrate the ad hoc growth that had taken place and the confusion of responsibility that could result, Donald drew attention to G.H. Mair's Neutral Press Committee with which Donald had been directly involved.⁴

The criticisms of the report were not limited, however, to the earlier propaganda organisations. On the contrary, the main theme of the report was the failure of the reorganisation of spring 1916 to effect the necessary improvements. Although the Foreign Office News Department had become the centre of propaganda organisation, the report considered the structural weaknesses of the system to be still inherent. There was, maintained Donald, the lack of a truly responsible head. Lord Newton⁵ was the Minister responsible but he was

1. Report on Propaganda arrangements by Robert Donald, 9 Jan. 1917, p.3, INF. 4/4B, P.R.O.

2. Ibid, p.3.

3. Ibid, p.4.

4. see above, p.30.

5. Thomas Wodehouse Legh (Lord Newton), 1857-1942, paymaster-general, 1915-16, assistant under-sec. at Foreign Office, 1916-19, in charge of propaganda and prisoners of war, 1916, finally in charge of prisoner of war department, 1916-19.

not fully occupied with propaganda and did not profess to have knowledge of publicity methods: 'His chief deputies had no experience of newspaper work until some time after the war began and are hampered by the traditional atmosphere of the Foreign Office, its attitudes towards the Press and its inability to appreciate the supreme importance of quick action.'¹ The Foreign Office, being the central organizing body, had not, in Donald's opinion, lessened to any extent the diffusion of responsibility and the concomitant confusion of method. To Donald, the relationship between Wellington House, the Foreign Office and the War Office, the three main bodies associated with propaganda in his estimation, demonstrated the absence of coordination, so vital to work of this kind. Each body tended to formulate its own policy, no general lines of policy having been established by the Foreign Office, whose task it should have been as the central controlling body. In connexion with these points, Donald went on to make a further criticism, that there was no efficient means of testing the effects of propaganda, not even an organised system of reporting, except for 'communications from Foreign Office representatives, who are not as a rule good judges'.²

The defensive aspect of British propaganda stemmed, Donald believed, from the lack of overall direction. He called for a much more positive policy, especially as the situation was so much in favour of the allies. Instead of the emphasis upon counter-propaganda, the answering of German lies, Donald argued that the Allies should determine the themes of propagandist confrontation. This meant rapid action, rapid distribution of information and news, at the kind of pace to which a newspaper editor was accustomed. This argument was to be constantly repeated throughout the report. Donald selected for criticism, examples of serious delay in the transmission of propaganda material. There was the despatch of Sir Douglas Haig, which related to the position on the Somme, published on 30 December 1916 and, by the time of the report, still not translated or distributed. Lloyd George had made a speech on 19 December 1916 which did not reach Norway until the 24 December, by which time it was dead news. The

1. Donald report, p.6.

2. idem.

newspaper editor was conscious that late news was no news.

Much of the blame for the delays in transmission of news was laid upon the cable and wireless sections. The British official message which was issued at 11 p.m. was cabled to Spain and Sweden at 11 a.m. the following day. By the time the news reached the press of these countries, it meant a delay of twenty-four hours. News, it was argued, should be issued the moment it became available: 'It is through news that public opinion in neutral countries is most easily influenced. At present our news propaganda department seems to be asleep more than ten hours out of the twenty-four (it does not work at night), and it is not alert during the rest of the time.'¹ The news services were also thought to be guilty of duplication and wasteful methods. Wellington House had an internal propaganda news service in Holland and the Foreign Office News Department had one in Spain. There was no check made, the report charged, to see if there was any duplication of the Reuters service. Overlapping was similarly a feature of translation work. Every department concerned with publicity work had its own staff for dealing with foreign newspapers.² The report advocated the centralisation of all this work.

Finally, Donald felt the use of existing sources of information was unsatisfactory, especially of the War Office Intelligence Department which channelled all the news from the front.

The report ended with a series of recommendations. Firstly the appointment of an overall director of propaganda. Secondly, the more efficient publication of official despatches. Thirdly, the more efficient use of cable and wireless and where possible the use of the telephone. Fourthly, greater cooperation with the press was proposed, that is the domestic press, which should be encouraged to set up exchange news services with foreign journals. Donald agreed that some such arrangements already existed, but he argued that there should be further expansion. Fifthly, a liaison section was proposed

1. Donald report, p.8.

2. See above, p.24.

which would bring about the coordination that was necessary.

The report was not totally condemnatory, for Wellington House was praised for its work in America, which 'could not have been handled more successfully and with more tact and better results than it has been'.¹ Donald praised the work done by Buchanan in Russia, Maxse in Holland and Gaunt in America. However, he commented, 'the extent to which the Diplomatic and Consular Services should assist in propaganda work is a question of policy. Personally, I think the less they have to do with it, the better.'²

When Lloyd George received the report from Donald, the cabinet had already decided that it was desirable to set up a separate Department of State to deal with propaganda.³ This decision was made without waiting for any further investigation, but no decisions were made as to its composition. Having seen the Donald report and other memoranda relating to the subject, the War Cabinet decided first to select a head of the new organisation and that he should issue a report on the whole question.⁴ At the same time the War Cabinet recognised that, though the future organisation should be independent, it should nevertheless maintain the closest association with the Foreign Office in regard to the policy that was to be pursued. The choice of director was important. At the end of his report, Donald had recommended three deputy directors, John Buchan,⁵ T.L. Gilmour,⁶ and Roderick Jones.⁷ Donald wanted someone of note to be director. As he informed C.P. Scott, 'I did not refer to individuals or recommend anyone for the position of Director. The position was offered to a number of members of Parliament and others but they declined.'⁸ Eventually, after much hesitation, Lloyd George

1. Donald report, p.10.

2. *ibid*, p.10.

3. war cabinet minutes, 2 Jan. 1917, Cab. 23/WC25, P.R.O.

4. war cabinet minutes, 24 Jan. 1917, Cab. 23/WC43, P.R.O.

5. John Buchan, Lord Tweedsmuir, 1875-1940, The Times correspondent on the western front 1915, major in army intelligence corps 1916, famous novelist.

6. T.L. Gilmour, Munitions Commissioner, National War Savings Committee, ex-journalist.

7. Roderick Jones, Managing Director of Reuters.

8. Donald to Scott, 29 May 1917, INF. 4/7, P.R.O.

appointed John Buchan, who had been strongly recommended by Lord Milner,¹ who wrote to the Prime Minister asking him to interview Buchan rather than 'reject him on ill-informed hearsay'.² Buchan was officially appointed on 9 February 1917 at a salary of £1,000 a year. Six days earlier Buchan had produced a scheme of reorganisation which closely followed the recommendations of the Donald report.³ The new department was to be divided into three sections: one was to consist of all the departments which dealt with one country or a group of countries; the second was to be concerned with the 'business' side; the third was to be the literary department. The first section was to be housed in the Foreign Office, the second was to be situated between the Foreign Office and Fleet Street and the third was to be at Wellington House. The Foreign Office was to house the Headquarters and four sub-departments were to be set up there. The first was to be the enemy propaganda department and was to include the Intelligence Bureau, previously situated at Wellington House, and to prepare digests of the foreign press; the second was to be a record keeping office for all departments; the third was to be a financial secretariat to establish central financial control; the fourth was to consist of liaison officers with G.H.Q., the Admiralty and the War Office. The preparation of military material for the use of the Department of Information was to be the responsibility of M.I.7b., a sub-section of the War Office, but the new department was to be the sole judge of the usefulness of the masses of material provided by M.I.7b. and was to be entirely in control of its distribution. Buchan's scheme drew attention to effective liaison, not only between the separate departments delineated in the scheme, but between the Department of Information and other governmental departments such as the Ministry of Munitions, the Board of Trade, the Treasury, the Ministry of Food Control and the Ministry of Shipping and National Service.

Subdivision took place within each of the three main sections. The geographical departments, as Buchan termed them,

-
1. Alfred Milner (Lord), 1854-1925, member of war cabinet 1916-18.
 2. Milner to Lloyd George, 17 Jan. 1917, F 38/2/2, L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib.
 3. memorandum to cabinet, 3 Feb. 1917, INF. 4/1B, P.R.O.

in the first section at the Foreign Office, numbered eleven, dealing with the British Dominions; France; Russia; Italy and the Balkan States; the U.S.A.; Spain, Portugal, and South America; Holland; Switzerland; Scandinavia; Japan and the Far East; and the Moslem World. Each department was to include an expert on the particular country or area. The second section, which was to be placed somewhere between Fleet Street and the Foreign Office, was divided into three, for cables and wireless, cinema and press articles. It was to take over the work of G.H. Mair's committee and was to supervise the Reuters News Service. It was also to have some control over the Admiralty wireless station at Faldhu in Cornwall. The permanent staff of this section was to be small, but to assist in its work it was to have a large rota of journalists to draw upon. The third section at Wellington House was to continue the work of producing books, pamphlets and other documents, writing, translating and distributing them. There was to be an art department distinct from the literature department, which would concern itself with picture and photographic propaganda, the former involving the paintings and sketches produced by the war artists attached to the department.

The new department was also supposed to deal with publicity and propaganda at home but the work was transferred to the control of the National War Aims Committee, which was created in June 1917.

Buchan's memorandum detailing the scheme was circulated through the various departments and the War Cabinet gave final approval to the proposals, suggesting that the new department be housed at the Foreign Office on the analogy of the Ministry of Blockade, and that it be called the Department of Information.¹

Many of Donald's wishes had been fulfilled. A single head of propaganda had been created, directly responsible to

1. War Cabinet minute, 20 Feb. 1917, Cab. 23/WC75, P.R.O.

the Prime Minister. Rationalisation had taken place with central financial control, a central records office and with a special liaison section to achieve coordination amongst the various sections within the department and with those other bodies outside the department which still dealt with propaganda in one form or another. The geographical sections were established with the emphasis, as Donald had desired, upon expertise and in recognition of the need to adapt methods to each country. The subordination of Wellington House to central direction was made absolute and a clear distinction was drawn, as Donald had sought, between news and literary propaganda. Wellington House was left to continue the methods that had had predominance in the first two years of the war - pamphlets, books, documents. The newer methods which were to be advanced at the expense of the old in the last two years of the war - cinema, press articles, cables and wireless - were each given their own section in a separate department. It was given the label 'business' section, because all these ventures could be exploited commercially. Films could be contracted out, and news sold, with a view to making a profit. Wellington House, however, could continue to produce material without the profit motive in mind.

The contents of Buchan's scheme were not welcomed by all. The Foreign Office had decided reservations and the final approval accorded by the War Cabinet was marked by a recognition of Foreign Office claims. These were put forward by Hubert Montgomery in a memorandum which A.J. Balfour¹ introduced in the following terms, 'I do not know how the question of propaganda now stands. But the arguments put forward in the accompanying paper deserve careful consideration before any fundamental severance is effected between those who are responsible for conducting foreign policy and those who are responsible for talking about it.'² In the memorandum, Montgomery began by stating the obvious, that any propaganda organisation would have to work in close contact with the Foreign Office. The Foreign Office, he argued, was still the

1. Arthur James Balfour, 1848-1930, created Earl 1915, First Lord of the Admiralty 1915-16, Foreign Secretary, 1916-19.
 2. introduction to memorandum, 15 Feb. 1917, F.O. 395/140, P.R.O.

best place to deal with foreign correspondents. Abroad there were many organisations working under the direction of ambassadors and ministers, and if they were to come under a separate authority then there would be confusion. Finally, Montgomery argued that if a special propaganda department was created separate from the Foreign Office, it would take place in a blaze of its own publicity which would not go down well in America. The War Office had praised the Maison de la Presse, the equivalent French organisation, but, as he pointed out, this had come into being without any publicity and anyway there was nothing to say whether it was more or less efficient than the British organisation. Montgomery continued:

Some straightening out and strengthening of our organisation for propaganda would be very much to the good and it would be very desirable that whosoever controls it should be able to devote his whole time to it without having other responsibilities; but he should be subject to the Foreign Secretary and his work should be a branch of the work of the Foreign Office in the same sense as the Blockade, and not an ostensibly Propaganda Office. 1

From the tone and content of the Donald report, it is clear that Montgomery's suggestions were precisely what Donald did not want. His repeated deprecatory remarks about the Foreign Office in the report² reveal Donald's desire to have control of propaganda removed entirely from the 'restrictive' hands of the Foreign Office and placed under the direction of journalists such as himself, whom, he believed, were the real experts when it came to matters of publicity. It was hoped that the latter might be able to exert influence through the creation of an Advisory Committee made up of leading journalists, whom the director would consult on matters of policy. The original committee was to include Lord Northcliffe (later replaced by Lord Beaverbrook), C.P. Scott (editor of The Manchester Guardian), Lord Burnham (editor of The Daily Telegraph), and Robert Donald himself. The relationship between the committee and the director was ill-defined, however, and this soon became a source of dissatisfaction to

1. memorandum, 15 Feb. 1917, F.O. 395/140, P.R.O.

2. see above, pp. 33-34.

Donald, who claimed that the committee was a farce because Buchan ignored it. The cause, Donald believed, was the Foreign Office. In a letter to Scott, Donald related that Lloyd George had been anxious to have the new organisation separate from the Foreign Office, but there had been a delay in getting the new system at work, partly because Buchan had had to undergo an operation which had prevented him from taking up his duties for six weeks.¹ The new organisation particularly in question, was the 'business' section which was to have been opened near Fleet Street. However, this recommendation was never carried out and it was housed, alongside the first section, in the Foreign Office. Moreover, when Buchan did finally take up his post, Donald claimed that he evaded the advisory committee, 'Mr. Buchan is under the Foreign Office almost as much, I believe, as if he were an official and I do not think that is desirable.'² Scott confirmed that he had received no communication from Buchan about the committee and the work Buchan wanted him to do.³ Lord Burnham also agreed with Donald:

I quite agree with you that the position of the so-called Advisory Committee of the Propaganda Department at the Foreign Office is thoroughly unsatisfactory. I do not quite see the use of our going there merely to be brought face to face with choses jugées. Either we ought to be advised and consulted beforehand, or we should get rid of any responsibility which we did not seek, and which has no real meaning. There is only one way in which we should be consulted and that is in regular committee, with the usual equality of treatment.⁴

Donald wrote to Buchan and to the Prime Minister complaining about the situation. As a result of this, Buchan was summoned to see the Prime Minister on 6 June 1917. Lloyd George wrote to Donald the same day about his discussion with Buchan concerning the Advisory Committee:

I intimated to him that in my judgment it ought to be his cabinet and that all questions of policy relating to this department should be discussed and decided there, subject, I need hardly say, to the supremacy of the War Cabinet.⁵

1. Donald to Scott, 29 May 1917, INF. 4/7, P.R.O.

2. *idem*

3. Scott to Donald, 28 May 1917, INF. 4/7, P.R.O.

4. Burnham to Donald, 30 May 1917, INF 4/7, P.R.O.

5. Lloyd George to Donald, 6 June 1917, INF. 4/7, P.R.O.

After this meeting, Buchan arranged weekly meetings of the committee. Donald was able, therefore, to report to Lloyd George the following month that he was much happier about the relationship. He reported that five meetings had been held since the meeting between Buchan and the Prime Minister on 6 June and that Buchan seemed willing to cooperate and that some changes had resulted from the discussions. Closer touch had been established with the press and The Times practice of sending telegrams of their own selection at government expense to Russia had been ended.¹ The situation was far from satisfactory, however. For Buchan, the advisory committee was a great headache, 'an idiotic business which the PM forced on me owing to his fear of the press'.² The weekly meetings were not likely to have made much difference and they did not. Little influence or control over the department could be exercised on such a basis, and the discussions remained on an informal level. In July, Lord Burnham wrote again to Donald to inform him of a discussion that Burnham had had with the Prime Minister. The latter had 'repeated that he was sure that he (Buchan) was not the right man for the job, in which opinion we all agree'.³ Donald, himself, remained a constant critic of the new department, arguing for further reorganisation. The Department of Information was, for him, an unsatisfactory compromise as long as it remained so closely linked with the Foreign Office.

Buchan found his position increasingly impossible. Hounded by Donald, dominated by the Foreign Office, he had insufficient influence in governmental circles. Though directly responsible to the Prime Minister, he lacked access to Lloyd George. The new Department of Information found it difficult to establish a working relationship with the more established ministries, which proved rather uncooperative. The War Office and the Admiralty proved obstructive over the supply of information, while Buchan found it very difficult to obtain money from the Treasury, as the Department was financed through the Vote of Credit every year. Only in

1. Donald to Lloyd George, 20 July 1917, INF. 4/7, P.R.O.

2. cited in Janet Adam Smith, John Buchan (London, 1965), p.209.

3. Burnham to Donald, 31 July 1917, INF. 4/7, P.R.O.

exceptional cases was he able to draw upon the Foreign Office Secret Service Fund.¹ The only way in which Buchan believed he could improve the situation, and in this he agreed with Donald, was to place himself under a director who would have more power in political circles. Thus in September 1917, Buchan asked Milner to forward a suggestion in the War Cabinet that the Department of Information should be placed under a minister and 'someone to whom I can have access'.² On 10 September 1917 the War Cabinet stipulated that 'Sir Edward Carson³ should extend his sphere of supervision and act as minister in charge of all propaganda, whether at home or abroad, so in future Colonel Buchan would be placed directly under Sir Edward Carson.'⁴ Carson, however, was not the best of choices. He had been virtually dismissed from the Admiralty and despatched to the War Cabinet where he 'took little part in the conduct of the war, but continued to nurse his grievance'.⁵ Carson was still chiefly interested in Irish affairs and proved to be closer to Donald and the Advisory Press Committee than he was to Buchan. Buchan's original delight at the new appointment rapidly turned to disillusionment.

Unable to answer satisfactorily the mounting criticism of its activities, the Department of Information found itself the subject of yet another propaganda report, presented by Robert Donald on 4 December 1917, following upon a request by Lloyd George on 19 October.

The second Donald report⁶ and its criticisms of the Department read very much like the first with its criticisms of the earlier propaganda organisations that had preceded the Department of Information. Donald began:

-
1. Buchan to Carson, 17 Sept. 1917, INF. 4/1B, P.R.O.
 2. Janet Adam Smith, p.209.
 3. Edward Henry Carson, 1854-1935, attorney general 1915, first lord of the admiralty, 1916-17, member of war cabinet 1917-18.
 4. Janet Adam Smith, p.209.
 5. Lord Beaverbrook, Men and Power 1917-1918 (London, 1956), p.176.
 6. Reports on Various Branches of Propaganda Work and Recommendations, Inquiry into the extent and efficiency of propaganda by Robert Donald, 4 Dec. 1917, INF. 4/4B, P.R.O.

After making a due allowance for the inevitable failure to obtain a satisfactory return for the efforts made and the expenditure incurred, I am of the opinion that the Department's activities are altogether inadequate and in some cases misdirected. Much time has been lost and many opportunities missed, and the necessity for rapidity of actions is not yet fully appreciated. 1

Donald claimed that the press of each country was the most potent influence 'a weapon of which the Department has not taken full advantage'.² The work in the cables and wireless section he considered to be amateurish and he directly opposed the idea of turning over the running of this section to Reuters. The major complaint was the usual one that the news was not being sent out quickly enough. Press articles came in for special criticism. They were not 'specially adapted to any newspaper and seldom to any country'.³ They were sent out in rotation, it was claimed, and half of them were of little interest. The contributors were said, by the report, to be unknown and usually without special knowledge. The report called upon the Department to make greater use of London correspondents, 'there seems to be a disinclination to use expert journalists, as in no case which has been brought to my notice is a journalist at the head of propaganda work abroad.'⁴ Donald took the opportunity in the second report to stress how many of the recommendations he had made concerning the organisation of propaganda in his first report had been ignored. He claimed that there had been little attempt to develop the use of the telephone, particularly to improve communications between Paris and Switzerland. Cooperation with foreign newspapers had not been carried on to the best advantage. Wellington House was issuing too much pamphlet material, though Donald left the main onslaught on this section to Mr. Arthur Spurgeon⁵ who carried out a separate investigation concerning Wellington House. The second report deplored the continued lack of a Record Officer to test the effectiveness of propaganda. A financial secretary was

1. 2nd Donald report, p.3.

2. *idem*

3. *ibid.*, p.4.

4. *idem*

5. Mr. Arthur Spurgeon, civil servant, member of Treasury Department.

only appointed in May 1917 following suggestions about financial confusion. Counter-propaganda was still neglected and lacked the necessary boldness. Buchan, Donald believed, had not carried the work of reorganisation far enough. The lack of unity and concentration had persisted. No attempt had been made to find accommodation in one building and if anything the various branches of work seemed to have increased. All this, allied to Buchan's lack of authority, made worse by financial limitations placed upon him by the Treasury, meant that further reorganisation was a pressing need, in Donald's opinion.

The criticisms in the second Donald report were not confined to structural aspects but were also directed against the actual content of the propaganda. Donald argued that there had been some very serious failures. 'We have failed in Russia both in the character and extent of our publicity work, and this failure has played into the hands of the enemy and of the Russian pro-Germans, assisting the German conquest which is due to propaganda and intrigue and not to force of arms.'¹ Donald investigated a list of articles intended for distribution in Russia which had been prepared in October 1917. He found two articles on the King and Royalty, one on the work of the Irish Congested Districts Board, one on American Hospitality, one on Sir Edward Grey, one on Serbians in Cambridge and one on patriotism in British prisons. 'I have not read the articles,' wrote Donald, 'I am only judging them by the title.'² Donald argued that more socialist articles, written by H.G. Wells for instance, would have been much more relevant. It was alleged that the department had paid for cables sent from a London newspaper for six months after the revolution, a paper which had demonstrated its sympathy with the old regime and which was detested by the new rulers. The paper in question was The Times. No attempt, the report claimed, had been made to explain the attitude towards labour of the British government or to deny that the war was a capitalist one. There was a failure to enlist Russian experts,

1. 2nd Donald report, p.6.

2. Memorandum on articles sent to allied and neutral newspapers, 5 Nov. 1917, INF. 4/4B, P.R.O.

it was charged. The head of the Petrograd bureau, it was alleged, could not speak Russian. The literature sent out was of little value, in Donald's estimation, in a country where 80% of the population was illiterate. Donald felt that oratory should have been exploited much more with the use of various public speakers. The cinema propaganda had been very effective but there were too few films. The Petrograd committee was said to be too isolated from the people and to be wasting huge sums of money, 'a distressing story of ineptitude and futility from beginning to end.'¹ Donald argued that propaganda in other allied countries was also poor. In Italy, he claimed that the work was carried out by a number of amateurs who failed to achieve sufficient penetration of the Italian press. The agent sent out to improve British work there, Thorold, was no journalist and yet had been asked to investigate newspaper propaganda and its possibilities. Work in France also needed improvement in Donald's opinion. As far as the geographical departments were concerned, his criticisms ended here for he did not investigate the other departments to any extent. The Intelligence Bureau also came in for criticism as being unnecessary since its information was largely derived from other governmental sources. Donald believed it might serve as a useful adjunct to the Foreign Office but it was unlikely to be of value as a branch of propaganda.

In the case of Wellington House, Sir Arthur Spurgeon maintained the general tone of condemnation. Firstly, he claimed that Wellington House had produced material issued in the United Kingdom, thus overlapping on the work at home. Then he cast doubt upon the value of the work in America, particularly now that the U.S.A. had entered the war. The personal system of propaganda that Sir Gilbert Parker had initiated was challenged on the grounds that 'the addresses to which booklets and pamphlets have been sent by the hundreds of thousands to people in the United States have been selected

1. 2nd Donald report, p.7.

on this side.¹ Spurgeon believed that there was a general waste of paper, especially in South America with the illustrated newspaper, America Latina. Tons of paper were wasted, it was argued, because of the haphazard distribution of such material. Piles of it were said to be wasting away in embassies and shipping agencies. The very quality of the newspaper was challenged as 'an example of expensive and partly misdirected propaganda'.² The editor, Barrios, was thought to be paid too much, £125 per issue for editorial and office expenses and salary. Six issues of the newspaper were examined. Out of 55 articles, 22 were extracts from speeches and documents which could have been sent out by cable; 22 were general war articles; only 11 were specifically directed towards South America. Distribution of another illustrated magazine, War Pictorial, was also criticised on the grounds that the issues were sent to Canada and Australia which published their own editions. Spurgeon recommended the ending of editions in English and that the War Pictorial should be printed separately in each country.

Another special appendix to the second Donald report was devoted to a detailed attack upon the book-buying policy of Wellington House. A large book publishing and buying business was carried on by Wellington House involving the expenditure of as much as £400,000 p.a. Publishers' books were bought, or publishers were provided with the contents to print, or Wellington House itself printed them for distribution abroad and for selling to home publishers. With regard to the buying of books, Spurgeon argued that there was no established principle governing purchase. There was therefore a waste of money, for example on 1/- books where the prices paid were too high. Wellington House would pay 9d. or 8½d. instead of the trade price of 7d. or even 6d. The appendix criticised the payment of five guineas for the use of the publisher's name and the cost of five pounds for advertising. It complained that there was no scheme devised

-
1. Reports on Various Branches of Propaganda Work and Recommendations, Report on the Operations at Wellington House by Arthur Spurgeon, 14 Nov. 1917, p.10, INF. 4/48, P.R.O.
 2. Reports on Various Branches of Propaganda Work and Recommendations, memorandum by Robert Donald on America Latina, p.17.

for selling English books abroad. Even the staffing situation at Wellington House was challenged. Spurgeon questioned the need for staff of three hundred, especially when many of these were of military age.

Not surprisingly, the replies of Buchan and Masterman to these criticisms were rapid, detailed and bitter. First Masterman, as head of the War Propaganda Bureau, and then Buchan, as director of the Department of Information, had been subjected to considerable pressure from the press which believed it was a much better judge of what was necessary where propaganda was concerned. The pressure from the press had increased as the war progressed and particularly so when Lloyd George came to power. His strong respect for public opinion and therefore the press, raised the latter into an exalted position and they were not prepared to let such an opportunity slip. The press had Lloyd George's attention. Masterman and Buchan did not.¹ The latter was prepared for battle in October 1917 when he wrote, 'It looks as if I am going to have another big row with the PM on the question of journalistic interference with my department.'² Both took full opportunity to reply, Masterman most eagerly, since he had never before had the chance, so bound in secrecy had been the work of his department.

Masterman began his rejoinder by showing how limited the investigation had been.³ Donald had spent three or four hours at Wellington House, Spurgeon seven afternoons. The bulk of the staff had never been examined. The report, he claimed, was remarkable for its lack of detailed evidence and there had been no attempt to ascertain the results of the work of Wellington House. It was easy for Donald to blame the situation in Russia upon a failure of propaganda because, Masterman observed, he advanced no evidence to prove it. Masterman could make equally extreme claims in a contrary

-
1. In an interview with Mrs. Masterman, she said that one of the things that distressed her husband most was the way Lloyd George accepted Donald's conclusions without asking Masterman for his views.
 2. Janet Adam Smith, p.209.
 3. Reply by Masterman to reports on Dept. of Information, Appendix II, 29 Dec. 1917, INF. 4/5, P.R.O.

argument:

Obviously, in view of the general turning of the civilised world against Germany and the continual entrance into the war against her of one country after another, in which a frantic German propaganda has apparently been counteracted or destroyed, the general result should not be condemned offhand. 1

Masterman went further:

As a result of the double propaganda 19 countries have declared war against Germany and 10 have broken off relationships with her. At the same time she is continually complaining of the poor results of her own propaganda contrasted with that of the British and announcing that 'malignant British lies' have turned all the world against her. 2

There were, argued Masterman, twenty thousand live files concerning countries abroad, yet not one of these had been examined by the investigators. These gave details of the effects that the various propaganda material was having. The illustrated newspapers were much more significant than had been recognised. Spurgeon's observations on America Latina were based, claimed Masterman, on little evidence, for there was no check on distribution, 'nor did he examine the testimony with which he could have been furnished that this propaganda was largely responsible for the complete turning of South American opinion against the Germans, in spite of the local influence they were able to exercise.'³ Continued propaganda in the U.S.A. was deemed essential by Masterman, just as it had been important in other allied countries. Anti-British propaganda, especially in the Hearst⁴ press, was still very active, and it was important that British policy should be carefully explained to the American public. Where War Pictorial was concerned, Masterman agreed that Australia in the Great War, published by Cassell, and The Canadian War Pictorial, published by Hutchinson, were sent out from England

-
1. Reply by Masterman to reports on Dept. of Information, Appendix II, 29 Dec. 1917, INF. 4/5, P.R.O., p.1.
 2. *idem*
 3. Masterman's reply, Appendix II, p.2.
 4. William Randolph Hearst, 1863-1951, American newspaper magnate.

as well as the English edition of War Pictorial, but these were devoted solely to matters relating to these countries, and it was most important that the Dominions should be clearly informed about British policy and what the British were doing in the war.

Pamphlets were still considered important by Masterman, who pointed out that the Department of Information was still issuing large numbers in the U.S.A. and that the British Parliament had given a special grant for pamphlet literature to counteract German and pacifist propaganda. German pamphlet activity was on the increase. As for the emphasis upon newspapers, 'Newspapers abroad are reducing themselves to ever smaller dimensions, and foreign news in them is ever more rigorously curtailed. There should indeed be no competition between one method and the other, both are necessary and both are necessary and both should be fully employed.'¹

As for the staff of three hundred, there were two hundred and three of them, of whom forty seven were men, twenty six of the men were over military age, rejected or declared as unfit, or simply not liable to service.

Masterman replied in greater detail to the charges against the book buying policy. He pointed out that expenditure on books amounted to 2% of total expenditure in 1917. Books were bought in response to special demands or need and in every case the price was a matter of careful negotiation. Moreover a simple analogy with ordinary booksellers such as W.H. Smith was unreasonable, since their interests were purely commercial. Wellington House was in a different position. Masterman also explained that the buying was supervised by A.H. Hawkins and A.S. Watt, both experts in the publishing world. Masterman then examined the four examples given in the appendix to the Donald report. They were Belgium under the German Eagle, published by Fisher Unwin at 10/6d, 500 copies being bought for 2/9d each; Invasion and War in Belgium, Fisher and Unwin at 15/-, 1,000 copies for 4/6d each; Pictures of Ruined Belgium, John Lane at 7/6d, 200 copies for 5/- each; Belgium in War-Time, Hodder and Stoughton at 6/-, 1,000 copies for 4/- each. The first

1. Masterman's reply, Appendix II, p.5.

two, Masterman indicated, were purchased below the lowest trade rates, the third at the lowest trade rate and the fourth at the lowest prices at which copies were supplied to W.H. Smith. The fourth book was to have been sold at 7/6d or 10/6d but the Belgian Government (for whom much book purchase was made) were hopeful of a wide sale and the price was therefore lowered.

The evidence concerning pamphlets was also scrutinised. Fourteen pamphlets were named in the appendix to the second Donald report, and of these, it was claimed, only two had been bought below the ordinary trade rates. Masterman was able to show that of these shilling pamphlets, the first four were a special Empire series published by Allen and Unwin and costing 9d each. There was little or no domestic consumption, therefore, by the trade. The next two Heinemann pamphlets were bought at 6d, 2d below the trade rates. The following two Hodder and Stoughton pamphlets bought at 8d and 8½d were special cases of urgent demand. The pamphlet of Smuts' wartime speeches was bought at 6½d, ½d less than anything paid by W. H. Smith. The pamphlet The Irish on the Somme, was a 2/- one printed in the list by mistake, but still cost only 8½d, 6d less than the cost to Smith's. Three more pamphlets were all bought below the trade rate, making a total of six below the trade rate apart from The Irish on the Somme. As Masterman stated, where costs were high it was usually because a special order was involved and the publishers were being asked to act beyond what was normal for them to do. This was especially true of periodicals where often the publishers were asked to add supplements either for special areas or countries or on particular subjects such as the Royal Navy. The fees paid to publishers Masterman believed to be entirely reasonable. The five pounds accounted for the publisher's imprint, sending out copies for review, keeping stock, rendering account of sales, receiving applications from abroad and the five guineas for advertising seemed hardly to be questioned, especially by a newspaper editor. Finally, Masterman answered the charge of overlapping with home propaganda. He agreed that some propaganda material issued by Wellington House was distributed in order to interest people at home, but this was incidental and no government money was specifically granted or used for this purpose.

It was also pointed out that some work was undertaken on behalf of the National War Aims Committee, which was responsible for home propaganda from June 1917.

All this, Masterman felt, justified his conclusion that 'sufficient evidence is here provided to show that if Mr. Donald had been good enough to discuss with us, before or after the preparation of his report, the subjects which he criticises, that report would have been of a very different character.'¹

Donald did reply to this, suggesting that with reference to book buying, the need to explain each purchase, demonstrated the lack of system.² He dismissed much of Masterman's argument on the grounds that he did not have sufficient time to consider all issues. He also suggested that the so-called special issue of four pamphlets for the Empire could not have been that special since they were published before the contract with Wellington House was signed. Finally, he questioned Masterman's sincerity, for Masterman had signed Spurgeon's verbatim report of the proceedings at Wellington House, saying that Spurgeon 'had been most thoroughly into the whole question'.³

Masterman found support, however, from Buchan, who also replied to Donald's criticisms of the Department of Information.⁴ He, too, resented the hasty and sweeping nature of the report, finding the criticisms vague and often inaccurate. Particularly aggravating was that Donald's report, which was supposed to have been confidential, had been shown to his friends and an article in The Daily Chronicle⁵ repeated most

-
1. Appendix III, Notes on a 'Report on the Purchase and Publication of Books', by Robert Donald, 29 Dec. 1917, INF. 4/5, P.R.O.
 2. Reports on Various Branches of Propaganda Work and Recommendations, Comments on Reports by Colonel Buchan and Mr. Masterman, 6 Jan. 1918, INF. 4/4B, P.R.O.
 3. *idem*
 4. John Buchan's comments on the reports of Mr. Donald and Mr. Spurgeon on the work of the Department of Information, 21 Dec. 1917, INF. 4/1B, P.R.O.
 5. 28 Dec. 1917.

of the criticisms contained within the report. Buchan did not deny that propaganda could be improved and he welcomed criticism, but he objected to the way in which the Donald report had been prepared, the way in which it was so readily received, and the way in which the Department was given insufficient opportunity to reply.¹ The press, Buchan observed, appeared to be full of preposterous tales, such as one Sunday paper which talked of tons of propaganda material wasting away at Archangel. Moreover, when the editor was asked to deny this, he stated that the source was so important that he could withdraw only at the instance of the Foreign Secretary. 'All this,' wrote Buchan, 'seems to constitute an attempt to give an impression of failure in propaganda which I believe to be quite unfounded. This I cannot think to be in the interests of public policy.'²

In his official reply to Donald's criticisms, Buchan challenged the opinions expressed on the work of the wireless and cables section. Everyone condemned it, Donald had argued and he had cited one witness in Wickham Steed, whose condemnation had read, Buchan hastened to point out, as follows, 'It is very difficult to give a definite opinion upon the various wireless and cable messages you have kindly submitted to me. Some of them seem to be excellently done, notably the Spanish service. Others are less good.'³ Donald's remarks about Reuters Buchan deemed irrelevant as no proposal had been made to hand over control to it. The wireless and cable service was not always belated and what Donald did not seem to be aware of was that all wireless was controlled by the Admiralty and was monopolised for naval and general shipping purposes. Unlimited access, therefore, was not available. Buchan denied that press articles were sent out without selection. They were carefully adapted to each country, and nearly all the contributors were working journalists or people who were regular writers in the British press. They did try to send out an even number of articles

1. Buchan to Carson, 28 Dec. 1917, INF. 4/5, P.R.O.

2. Buchan to Carson, 28 Dec. 1917, INF. 4/5, P.R.O.

3. John Buchan's comments on 2nd Donald report, 21 Dec. 1917, INF. 4/1B, P.R.O.

per week but this did not mean that the articles were sent out in rotation. Particular use was made of foreign journalists, and Buchan gave evidence of this. All articles for Spanish, Portuguese and South American press were written by native writers. Regular contributions were obtained from such writers as Cordurier de Chessignas, Mr. Zimmerman, Mr. Bonavia and Mr. Mitrany for Italy, Switzerland and Rumania. Constant access was arranged for foreign correspondents to the Department. It was especially a policy to have American journalists write up their own stories rather than be fed ready written British articles. The foreign press was carefully cultivated, as in America where a contract was signed with the Reciprocal News Service which supplied one hundred and five newspapers in the Middle West. In direct contradiction to Donald, Buchan pointed out that the heads of propaganda in Spain, Switzerland and Norway were all working journalists. In Russia, one of the joint heads was a journalist and in Paris there was a press committee to advise the head of the propaganda bureau there. In Holland too, considerable use was made of journalistic expertise. Buchan also added that a journalist did not necessarily make a good propagandist.¹

Buchan protested that Donald had never paid a visit to the cinema branch. It had been one of Donald's original² proposals that the two committees that dealt with films be merged but as Buchan pointed out, the War Office committee had refused to submit to Treasury control and so it had proved impossible to implement Donald's proposals in this case.

Masterman obtained support from Buchan over America Latina. The circulation was carefully checked, and the editor Mr. Barrios, did not receive any salary. The £125 for editorial and office expenses in London and Paris, where special editions were prepared, seemed quite reasonable. London was also deemed the best distribution centre since the paper was sent to so many different countries. Donald had

1. John Walter in Spain and Julian Le Grande in Switzerland, both journalists, were heavily criticised especially by Donald.

2. in the 1st Donald report.

suggested the use of the South American Press Ltd. headed by Estin Grundy, 'but the cables sent by him were discontinued because he seemed to be incapable, without constant supervision, of sending anything which justified the expense'.¹ Donald's other suggestion had been to use the Agencia Americana in Argentina. This had once been a pro-German agency though it had improved since. But as Reuters provided a perfectly adequate service, why, asked Buchan, change it?

The criticisms made of Russian propaganda were strongly denied. Again Buchan accused Donald of providing no evidence. He had made no investigation of the Russian propaganda branch except for talks with Bernard Pares² whose connexion with it was erratic. Hugh Walpole³ commented, 'There are so many inaccuracies in the Russian section of this Report that it is difficult to believe that an investigation has been made at all.'⁴ Buchan showed that the experts were indeed experts for both Dr. Williams and Major Thornhill, two of the three heads of the Petrograd bureau, both spoke Russian fluently, and Mr. Walpole moderately. Moreover, Pares later withdrew his criticisms. Ever since the revolution, speaking campaigns had been instituted and the experts in Russia had been supplied with all they asked for except sufficient numbers of Russian speaking soldiers, and the War Office was to blame in part here for not releasing them. Groups of Englishmen had been formed and sent to speak on labour issues. Captain Bromhead, it was true, was short of officers for his cinema work, but the work was organised on a large scale thanks to the British ambassador, Sir George Buchanan.⁵ The point about The Times telegrams was partly true, but they had been stopped after three months, not six. As Buchan stressed, propaganda broke down in Russia because diplomacy had broken down and propaganda could only move in the wake of the latter.

-
1. Buchanan's comments on 2nd Donald report.
 2. Bernard Pares, 1867-1949, historian, attached to Russian army, 1914-17, attached to British ambassador, 1917-18.
 3. Hugh Walpole, 1884-1941, novelist, served in Russian Red Cross, in charge of Anglo-Russian propaganda bureau, 1917-18.
 4. Walpole to Montgomery, 18 Dec. 1917, F.O. 395/235, F.R.O.
 5. Sir George William Buchanan, 1854-1924, ambassador to Russia, 1910-18.

As far as France and Italy were concerned, Buchan argued that so little in the way of actual charges had been made that it was difficult to make any answer. In Italy Thorold had been sent to organise matters and he was a journalist. In France every effort had been made to improve the efficiency of propaganda through various organisations. As for cooperation with the Allies in propaganda matters, this had been attempted as far as was possible. Close contact had always been maintained with La Maison de la Presse; Thorold established close relations with the Italian bureau headed by Gallenga and which had only been set up in 1917; and in the U.S.A., Geoffrey Butler¹ had built up strong links with the American Information Bureau.

One major point Buchan was prepared to concede 'as of some importance and that is the possible interference of our propaganda with the paper requirements of the British press. This is a matter which I have long felt wanted discussion, and I should be glad to have a conference with the Newspaper Proprietors Associations on the subject.'²

Buchan described, in his letter to Carson, the problems of standardizing the workings of propaganda. Propaganda work, he stated, was a matter of infinite small detail and involved an hour to hour study of foreign opinion. Secrecy and camouflage had always been an integral part of the work. Buchan remarked:

We frequently receive complaints that the Government is doing nothing and our attention is called to publications, exhibitions, etc., with the comment that it is shameful that such matters should be left to private enterprise. In nearly every case the things referred to have been the work of the Department.³

The main aim of propaganda, he believed, was to impart accurate information and to explain British policy. It could not work miracles and be expected to stem anti-war propaganda

-
1. Sir (George) Geoffrey Butler, 1887-1929, Cambridge don, appointed to Foreign Office News Department, 1915.
 2. Buchan to Carson, 28 Dec. 1917, INF. 4/5, P.R.O.
 3. *ibid*

in foreign countries when those countries could not hold it down. And what, Buchan asked, could the Department say for itself? Its secrecy of working meant that defence in the press was impossible, nor could the results of propaganda be estimated.

Defence did come from another quarter, however, namely the Foreign Office News Department, where Montgomery added his voice in complaint against the bias of the second Donald report.¹ Montgomery accused Donald of hardly touching upon the News Department and of deliberately misusing Wickham Steed's letter relating to the cables and wireless.² Montgomery defended the utility of America Latina and other illustrated newspapers, saying that Spurgeon and Donald should have checked with the public that received them. Where press articles were concerned, Montgomery maintained that they were specially adapted and the facilities provided for press correspondents were good.

The protestations of Masterman, Buchan and Montgomery were not necessarily intended to prevent change. Buchan welcomed reorganisation. He wrote to Northcliffe, 'The Department can only be worked under a chief who had authority with the War Cabinet, and by a director who had the confidence of that chief.'³ Although some moves towards reorganisation took place under Carson, particularly an attempt to concentrate all the propaganda organisations in one centre, Buchan's letter to Northcliffe was by implication a criticism of Carson, and he was not alone in his opinion. In the words of an interested commentator, Carson was 'hostile to the Prime Minister, critical of the Government and nursing a grievance. His enthusiasm for the cause of propaganda was not apparent.'⁴ Buchan believed that if Carson was replaced by a more influential and enthusiastic director, the result would be a more powerful propaganda department. The logical conclusion was the creation of a ministry, an idea acceptable

1. minute, 18 Dec. 1918, F.O. 395/235, P.R.O.

2. see above, p.53.

3. quoted in Janet Adam Smith, p.211.

4. Lord Beaverbrook, Men and Power 1917-1918 (London, 1956), p.266.

to Buchan, provided that its formation was based upon past developments, which hope both Masterman and Montgomery echoed, rather than upon the second Donald report and its recommendations.

The resignation of Carson, on 23 January 1918, paved the way for the emergence of the new ministry. On the same day, Frederick Guest, Lloyd George's chief whip, wrote to the Prime Minister suggesting that 'Max' Aitken (Lord Beaverbrook) be given the job of controller of propaganda: 'He is bitten with it, knows it, and I want him anchored.'¹ On 10 February 1918, Lloyd George invited Beaverbrook to become Minister of Information and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. It was to be his task to found the new Ministry of Information, which eventually came into being on 4 March 1918, marking the culmination of the development of propaganda organisation in the First World War.

The new Ministry assumed control of all activities related to propaganda. There were three main divisions within the Ministry. The first dealt with foreign propaganda, the second with propaganda in military zones and the third with home propaganda. The division dealing with foreign propaganda was virtually the old Department of Information, headed by John Buchan and divided into four sub-sections. The first of these was administration under the direction of Montgomery. The second sub-section controlled the production of all propaganda other than press and cable work. Under the direction of Masterman, it consisted of a pictorial and art exhibitions section, a pamphlet section, a section to deal with visits to the front and finally one which had responsibility for the various nations which were the targets of propaganda. The third sub-section under T.L. Gilmour dealt with the press and cable work and was sub-divided into a press section under G.H. Mair, a Cables and Wireless section under Sir Roderick Jones and also a third section which dealt with propaganda through the cinema. The fourth and final sub-section was the Intelligence Department.

1. Lord Beaverbrook, Men and Power 1917-1918 (London, 1956), p.267.

The division which controlled propaganda in military zones, was responsible for all propaganda material on military subjects. It was under the direction of the War Office department, M.I.7 under Colonel Fisher. The work was subdivided so that M.I.7b prepared military articles, news and examined German propaganda, M.I.7c arranged for visits to the front, and M.I.7d examined and analysed the foreign press.

The third division was Home Propaganda and was run by the National War Aims Committee. The work of propaganda in enemy countries was transferred to the organisation headed by Lord Northcliffe, which was directly responsible to the War Cabinet and not the Ministry of Information, though propaganda in Turkey, and the Near and Middle East remained under the jurisdiction of the Ministry.

Though the new Ministry was founded upon the older propaganda organisations, it reflected the influence of the recommendations of the second Donald Report. An independent body was established to run propaganda, free from the control of the Foreign Office. Control was placed in the hands of journalists, or as they were known, the 'press-gang,' with Lord Beaverbrook as the Minister (and editor of the Daily Express), Lord Northcliffe (owner and editor of The Times) in separate charge of propaganda in enemy countries, and Lord Rothermere (owner of The Daily Telegraph) in charge of propaganda in neutral countries. Later, Robert Donald himself, was to be appointed to the Ministry as director of propaganda in neutral countries. The centre of gravity of the work in propaganda was shifted away from that of Masterman's department. Much less pamphlet material was produced bringing about a considerable reduction of the use of paper - by one sixth. The need for such economy had been stressed at a conference on 16 January 1918.¹ A report on Wellington House for the Ministry of Information, later in the year, was to confirm the findings of Donald and Spurgeon: 'the work of Wellington House has, owing to a number of causes, been carried on in a machine-like groove, with regular output and

1. between Buchan and the Newspaper Proprietors Association.

too great a similarity in character and distribution. Wellington House has wrongfully become more of a great publishing institution than an effective propaganda agency.¹ Attention and emphasis was switched to the press, cinema, cables and wireless, and there was a change in approach of the kind Donald had demanded. Propaganda took on a new note of offensive. The Ministry sought to set the pace rather than rely on counter-propaganda.

Beaverbrook personified the new attitude. He proved to be an active and vigorous chief, who sought to exercise an authority that had never been granted Buchan. He brought journalistic expertise to the Ministry, expertise which Donald admired, getting news out rapidly and first, exploiting sensational stories. But also Beaverbrook was a skilled and experienced propagandist long before he became Minister of Information. Beaverbrook was Canadian and in February 1915 he had been appointed recording and narrative officer for historical purposes with the Canadian army in Europe. Under the title 'Eye-Witness', Aitken, as he then was, sent back reports in the form of articles about the activities of the Canadian troops at the front. He wrote the long pamphlet Canada in Flanders, an account of the work of the Canadian 1st Division. In September 1915, his eye-witness accounts came to an end when the British War Office substituted accredited press correspondents, refusing Beaverbrook's request to continue. But Beaverbrook diverted his attentions elsewhere. He was accumulating a vast amount of material, especially daily diaries from a large number of Canadian officers (each company commander kept a diary), and in January 1916 he requested financial aid from the Canadian government to provide proper storage and to carry out efficient filing of the growing amount of material. If it was not granted he forecast chaos. It was, and Beaverbrook became officer in charge of the Canadian War Records Office in January 1916. Though the prime function of the office was an historical one, it did assume a subsidiary role of publicising Canadian efforts. Thus a weekly communique from the front was cabled

1. Confidential report on Wellington House by Major-General A.D. McRae, 1 July 1918, F/2/307, Bbk. papers, Bbk. Lib.

to Canada and issued to the British press; the Canadian War Pictorial was issued; Canada in Khaki, an illustrated war book was published; and a news bulletin was issued to the troops. In April 1916, the War Office authorised the appointment of an official photographer to the front. Beaverbrook also had appointed an official cine-photographer who was attached to the Canadian corps. Beaverbrook acted as chairman of the War Office Cinematograph committee and helped initiate the Canadian War Memorial Fund which enabled leading artists to go to the front and record their impressions on canvas. All this allied to his experience as a leading editor made Beaverbrook a most reasonable candidate for the post of Minister of Information.

Nevertheless, Beaverbrook's appointment was received with marked hostility from many quarters. The new ministry was created with full publicity and thus Beaverbrook did not have the sometimes useful cloak of secrecy that had existed in the early years of the war. Though the new ministry was created to remove various problems, and was partially successful, the very attempt brought new problems in its wake. The creation of a new department to direct British propaganda in allied and neutral countries had from the very beginning of the war excited inter-departmental conflict. Various ministries such as the Foreign Office, the War Office and the Admiralty, were involved with propaganda of one kind or another and believed that propaganda which related to their sphere of interest and activity should be their sole responsibility. This problem grew more acute as the scope of propaganda grew and with it the directing organisation. The creation of a new Ministry was only to exacerbate problems of demarcation. To the older, more established ministries, the Ministry of Information represented further encroachments on powers already steadily eroded by the war cabinet. Beaverbrook himself, was very much a Lloyd George man. He also symbolised the increasing power of the press in British politics, a matter about which Parliament was particularly sensitive. The Ministry of Information was, therefore, harassed from the start and throughout its existence was faced with a series of administrative disputes

as it sought to establish its powers vis-a-vis other ministries, and with constant criticism from an antagonistic parliament and from an eager press which relished the whole situation.

The organisational problems that were to face Beaverbrook had already been heralded by changes that had been taking place in the Department of Information. In October 1917 Robert Donald had recommended to Sir Edward Carson the transfer of the Intelligence Bureau of the Department of Information to the Foreign Office¹ and in the following month, Buchan made this an official request.² In order that it should be carried out, it was necessary to remove the News Department from the Foreign Office and house it with the other propaganda departments. This proposal brought an immediate reaction from the Foreign Office. Montgomery raised the question of His Majesty's representatives abroad:

When it was decided that Propaganda matters were no longer to be under the direction of the Foreign Office, the fact was, I think, lost sight of by those who came to the decision, that much of the work has necessarily to be done through, or under the direction of our Representatives abroad and that this entails a very considerable correspondence with them which could not be conducted by any office other than the Foreign Office, without placing them in the position of serving two masters. 3

Under these circumstances, a liaison officer was essential and in January 1918, Stephen Gaselee⁴ was proposed for the post, so that everything he initialled would then be accepted abroad as having Foreign Office authority, 'but it would be understood in every case where any question of policy, as opposed to details or routine, was concerned, the despatches and telegrams in question should be referred to Sir E. Crowe for reference to the political department concerned.'⁵ The Department of Information had to have a regular supply of Foreign Office telegrams so that they were able to trace the

1. 25 Oct. 1917, INF. 4/4B, P.R.O.

2. memorandum, 6 Nov. 1917, INF. 4/9, P.R.O.

3. minute, 24 Nov. 1917, F.O. 395/235, P.R.O.

4. Stephen Gaselee, 1882-1943, a Cambridge don who entered the Foreign Office in 1916.

5. minute, 12 Jan. 1918, F.O. 395/235, P.R.O.

history of policy, in order that they were sufficiently equipped to answer the questions of correspondents. The Foreign Office cypher, cypher R, had also to be taken to the Department. All this necessitated the creation of a messenger service between the Foreign Office and the Department of Information. The outcome of all this was that the News Department was to retain a dual identity serving two masters. The Foreign Office was determined that the demarcation of functions should be clear. The creation of a liaison officer even caused a dispute as to where he should be housed. In February 1918, Cecil told Buchan that Gaselee would have to remain at the Foreign Office with the probability that there would constantly arise occasions when questions of policy made it desirable for a particular kind of propaganda to be done.¹ It meant that Gaselee would not be able to discuss personally drafts for representatives abroad with the draftees. The telephone would be the only answer. The new Minister of Information in the process of drawing up the plans of his new ministry, had to accept this situation.

The issue of the News Department, however, did not concern Beaverbrook too much, as he accepted the process of centralisation, but he became much more involved in a quarrel about the Intelligence Bureau. When, in November 1917,² Buchan had requested the transfer of the Intelligence Bureau to the Foreign Office, he had done so in the hope that it would lead to a more cordial cooperation with the intelligence departments of the Admiralty and the War Office. It would seem that the War Office had been withholding information. Both Buchan and Headlam confirmed this. The latter pointed out³ that the Intelligence Department had circulated widely information relating to the situation in Germany and Austria-Hungary from an agent recommended by the Foreign Office. The Director of Military Intelligence had information that this agent was in the pay of the Germans but had withheld the information. Further evidence of lack of cooperation

1. Cecil to Buchan, 28 Feb. 1918, F.O. 395/235, P.R.O.

2. see above, p.62 and footnote 2.

3. letter to Beaverbrook, 28 Feb. 1918, F/1/33, Bbk. papers, Bbk. Lib.

came from the head of the Intelligence Bureau, Lord Gleichen. He had talked with the Director of Military Intelligence in March 1917, when the new department had emerged and had not spoken to him since. He had sent Arnold Toynbee to visit the War Office and the latter had reported that there was considerable material of value that might be used by the Intelligence Bureau, but Gleichen was refused permission to see or use it. Moreover, General MacDonagh had applied, on behalf of the War Office, to have Gleichen's bureau abolished.¹ Robert Donald confirmed their observations:

All the information which the War Office and the Admiralty Intelligence Branches possess is not placed at the disposal of Lord Edward Gleichen's Intelligence Bureau, which reports to Colonel Buchan, nor does the Propaganda Department get the benefit of the knowledge of experts in the service of the War Office and Admiralty Intelligence branches, some of whom are students of German psychology and authorities on conditions in enemy countries. The full cooperation of the War Office Intelligence Bureau is essential in carrying propaganda into enemy countries. 2

Donald pronounced the Intelligence Bureau useless as its information was largely second-hand. Buchan hoped that the transfer to the Foreign Office would improve this situation by reducing overlapping functions and by making for better coordination, as the main function of the intelligence branch was to compile summaries of the political situation in various countries. Not until February 1918 was the transfer approved. The problem was space. The Foreign Office had no room until Donald's recommendation of concentrating the whole of propaganda organisation under one roof had been implemented, which meant the creation of space in the Foreign Office through the extraction of the News Department. It took some time, however, for Carson and Buchan to find a new and suitable site for the Department. Thus it was not until 19 February that the War Cabinet approved Balfour's request that the Intelligence Department be transferred to the Foreign Office.

-
1. Gleichen to Beaverbrook, 28 Feb. 1918, F/1/33, Bbk. papers, Bbk. Lib.
 2. Memorandum to Sir Edward Carson, 25 Oct. 1917, INF. 4/4B, P.R.O.

Beaverbrook, in the process of designing his new ministry, made it immediately clear to the war cabinet that he wished the decision relating to the transfer to be reversed. He wrote that the first need of the Ministry of Information 'is a competently staffed Intelligence Department. Without such a department the work of propaganda at home and abroad is impossible for it must lack direction and material'.

Beaverbrook also added that, 'as my duties cover both foreign and home propaganda, the collection of intelligence must cover a much wider area than that which would be dealt with by a Foreign Office department.'¹ Balfour, on behalf of the Foreign Office, was not prepared to accommodate the new minister: 'The scheme of the Minister of Propaganda involves, on the face of it, the reversal of a decision recently come to by the Cabinet and the dislocation of all the arrangements made in this office, with Cabinet authority, for organising the Intelligence Bureau as a part of the Foreign Office work.'² The issue was referred by the cabinet to a conference under the chairmanship of Smuts,³ with representatives from the Foreign Office, the War Office, the Admiralty and the Ministry of Information. Smuts agreed with Beaverbrook's suggestion that the Foreign Office should constitute its own intelligence service while the Department (now Ministry) kept its own. But Hardinge,⁴ for the Foreign Office then argued that any of the Foreign Office people in the Department of Information should be free to transfer if they should wish to do so. Immediate opposition to this was raised by Beaverbrook, who pointed out that it was a Civil Service ruling that officials could not transfer from one department to another without the consent of their original department. Hardinge would have none of this and Smuts declined to give any ruling on this particular issue, though the conference did agree that the Intelligence Bureau should remain with the Department of Information, subject to Balfour's agreement, while the Foreign

-
1. memorandum by Beaverbrook, 20 Feb. 1918, Cab. 24/43, GT3702, P.R.O.
 2. memorandum to war cabinet, 28 Feb. 1918, Cab. 21/43, GT 3788, P.R.O.
 3. Jan Christian Smuts, 1870-1950, South African General and politician, member of war cabinet, 1917-1918.
 4. Charles Hardinge, 1858-1944, Baron of Penshurst, Viceroy of India, 1910-1916, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, 1916.

Office would constitute its own intelligence service.¹ The result was that most of the officials of the Intelligence Bureau wished to transfer from the new ministry to the Foreign Office. A further conference on 13 March failed to settle the issue. Buchan informed Beaverbrook that the majority of officials wished to resign against which the minister protested, suggesting that the men concerned were attracted by the prestige of occupying positions in an old established department like the Foreign Office, and reiterated his argument that Civil Service rules would not permit such a transfer. The only solution he could offer was for the situation to revert to the position before the War Cabinet's approval of the transfer and for the Foreign Office to construct its own intelligence section. Smuts, as chairman of the second conference, said this would result in duplication. Beaverbrook, however, offered to give up the production of Cabinet reports but insisted on keeping his staff in reply to Hardinge's enquiry as to whether the officials who had resigned would be allowed to transfer. Smuts asked Buchan to enquire of the men concerned whether they would continue for a couple of months and then reconsider their decision. This was clearly an unrealistic proposal. Smuts was not prepared to deliver a final ruling and his reply to Beaverbrook's repeated point about civil service rules, was that the officials concerned were not civil servants, but individual experts, voluntarily serving the country in wartime. The problem was therefore returned to the War Cabinet unsolved with the proposal that the Bureau stay with the Ministry of Information, that the Foreign Office constitute its own department and that the Cabinet receive two sets of reports.² Clearly someone had to give way and Lloyd George could hardly be expected to back Beaverbrook against the rest. Beaverbrook, therefore, allowed the various members of the Intelligence Bureau to make their choice, which was to resign, the Ministry losing thereby the expert services of such men as J.W. Headlam, Arnold Toynbee and Lewis Namier.

1. report to cabinet on conference, 5 March 1918, Cab. 24/44, GT 3823, P.R.O.

2. cab. 24/45, GT. 3942, P.R.O.

Beaverbrook lost this first battle but he was not the kind of man to give in easily. His concession here was made in order to strengthen his arm in another, related dispute, this time concerning the supply of information. Beaverbrook was concerned not only that the Minister should have an intelligence bureau staffed by experts, but that they should be fully informed. There should not be any question of the Ministry being starved of information in the way which the Department of Information seemed to have been. It was vital if the Ministry of Information was to achieve full and proper recognition as a department of state that it should receive secret and confidential information on the same basis as every other ministry, providing that information directly concerned the functions of the ministry. The conference on 5 March 1918¹ had revealed, however, that the Admiralty and War Office did not concur. They both agreed through their representatives at the conference, that it was essential that political information be sifted by experts in foreign politics and for that reason they could only agree to transmit their political information to the Ministry of Information through the agency of the Foreign Office. In addition, Sir Reginald Hall, representing the Admiralty, emphasised the importance of secrecy and that one single instance of careless publicity might endanger the lives of various agents and that the Foreign Office was accustomed to handling the most secret of matters. Smuts could only suggest the status quo remain but Beaverbrook refused to accept the decision of the conference that the War Office and Admiralty should work through the Foreign Office and he made it clear that he would raise the issue again after some time and experience of working on this provisional arrangement.² Two weeks later, Beaverbrook wrote to the War Cabinet requesting 'direct access to the entire political intelligence of Admiralty, War Office and Foreign Office.'³ He stated that he was prepared to allow only himself and one other to examine material, that he would name the latter if the cabinet gave approval and that this other person would

1. cab. 24/45, GT 3942, P.R.O.

2. cab. 24/44, GT 3823, P.R.O.

3. memorandum to War Cabinet, Cab. 24/45, GT 3964, P.R.O.

not be connected with the press. Beaverbrook was well aware of the hostility there was towards the journalist in government and of the implications of the various remarks made about secrecy, that journalists were not to be trusted where there was news. However, his main concern was to run an efficient ministry and as Beaverbrook affirmed, 'I am convinced that nothing short of this free and untrammelled flow of political intelligence will enable me to carry out any organisation on efficient lines.'¹ In order to settle the question, the War Cabinet directed Lord Robert Cecil to confer with Beaverbrook. Beaverbrook felt Cecil to be most reasonable in discussion, but could not reach any agreement, as Cecil also maintained that political information should be transmitted via the Foreign Office. Yet another conference was convened, meeting on 12 April, when Beaverbrook raised the issue again only to find the Admiralty, War Office and Foreign Office united against him. Beaverbrook remained dissatisfied, and proposed to address the cabinet and get an order to the effect that the Admiralty and the War Office should supply information direct and that if he did not succeed, he would have to 'accept the position that a Ministry of Information "Functioning on its own" was not called for and that, in fact, all that it could do was function as a Department of the Foreign Office'.² The issue was left unsettled, but Beaverbrook was determined to get a ruling, as the status and independence of his Ministry was at stake.

Numerous other frustrations faced the Ministry. Beaverbrook cited various examples.³ The Ministry was supplied with large numbers of photographs from the western front by the War Office. These were naturally censored at the front by the War Office, but then, instead of their being sent directly to the Ministry, the War Office and the Press Bureau were claiming the right to censor them again at home. This, claimed Beaverbrook, was wrong, for the photographs were to

1. memorandum to War Cabinet, Cab. 24/45, GT 3964, P.R.O.

2. comment by Beaverbrook at conference, First Lord's Room, 12 April 1918, F.O. 800/207, P.R.O.

3. to Lloyd George, F/4/5/21, L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib.

be used for publicity purposes and this sphere was the sole responsibility of his ministry. The War Office quite correctly censored the photographs from a military point of view, but then judgments after that as to their suitability for propaganda was surely the function of the Ministry and no one else: 'As it is, the negatives are sent by G.H.Q. to M.I.7a, from thence to the Press Bureau, then to the Associated Agencies to be printed; from here the prints go back to the Press Bureau, whence in many cases they are sent to the War Office and back; then back again to the Associated Agencies; and thence, finally, after grievous delay, to the Ministry of Information, by whose staff they are actually taken in the field.'¹ As Beaverbrook pointed out, in the Canadian case he had direct personal knowledge, this was not the case where the Canadian War Records Office was concerned, nor in the case of the Australian department where the photographs were sent via M.I.7a. direct from G.H.Q. France.

Beaverbrook also discovered that straightforward propaganda proposals did not go through in a straightforward manner. In March, soon after he had become minister, Beaverbrook decided, following a number of alarming reports, that a propaganda mission to Japan would be most apposite. It was suggested that a military and civilian mission might be sent but there was an immediate reaction against this. The King's secretary, Lord Stamfordham, wrote to Beaverbrook² suggesting that the Japanese mission should be purely military and that any propaganda mission ought to be separate. The Secretary of State for War agreed with this, saying that a military mission to present a baton to the Mikado should be all that was sent. The War Cabinet decided³ that the mission should be sent, that H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught should be invited to head it and naming him Prince Arthur of Connaught; that a peer of distinction should be added; that the Ministry of Information should consider names of minor officials who might be suitable as members; that the Ambassador at Tokyo should be consulted as to the most preferable mission and that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should report before a final decision

1. to Lloyd George, F/4/5/21, L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib.
 2. 21 March 1918, F/2/264-271, L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib.
 3. 21 March 1918, Cab. 23/5/366/10, P.R.O.

was taken. At a later cabinet meeting¹ it was agreed that the composition of the mission should be left to the Secretary of State for War, the Secretary of State for the Foreign Office and Lord Beaverbrook. The mission was approved and was to go ahead. By April, Balfour had arranged with Prince Arthur of Connaught that he should head the mission. He also tried to get Lord Salisbury to go, but the latter declined on the grounds that he would not be given powers to negotiate with the Japanese diplomats but would be just a titular figure. Balfour then decided that, as he could find no one else suitable, the idea of a civilian mission should be dropped. Beaverbrook was not prepared to accept this. He had already made his own approaches to Lord Beresford, who was willing to go without any diplomatic powers. However, Balfour rejected this idea as Lord Beresford was a sailor and hardly suitable on a military mission. On 26 April, Beaverbrook communicated to the cabinet that it was unreasonable of Balfour to expect the decision about the mission to be reversed. He also confirmed that he had already approached a number of officials other than Lord Beresford. But at the cabinet meeting on 30 April, there was little sympathy for the Minister of Information. Curzon² agreed with Balfour that Beresford was not suitable, while Austen Chamberlain³, though not a member of the cabinet that made the decision, felt that Beaverbrook did not have the power to appoint anyone but only to submit names. Certainly, he argued, Beaverbrook had no power to offer the headship of the civilian mission to anyone. He also agreed with Balfour, that the diplomatic situation was very delicate and that Beresford was not suitable on these grounds. Mr. Barnes⁴ agreed with Balfour that if no suitable head was available then there should be no civilian mission. Smuts was also against the civilian mission, disliking the linking of the utility service of propaganda to the honorific function of a mission headed by Prince Arthur. Thus, although the Japanese themselves had been persuaded to accept a civilian mission, and all agreed that it was necessary, the Cabinet

1. 29 March 1918, Cab. 23/5/377/12, P.R.O.

2. George Nathaniel Curzon, 1859-1925, lord privy seal, 1915-16, lord president of the council and member of war cabinet, 1916-18, interim foreign secretary Jan.-Oct. 1919, Foreign Sec. 1919-24.

3. Austen Chamberlain, 1863-1937, secretary for India, 1915-17, member of war cabinet, 1918.

4. George Nicoll Barnes, 1859-1940, member of war cabinet, 1917-18.

decided¹ not to send the mission. Beaverbrook tried to have the cabinet re-discuss the mission on 23 May, but it was removed from the agenda by Bonar Law's request on the understanding that he and Balfour were going to discuss the matter with Beaverbrook. Lord Beresford was writing to Beaverbrook as late as 13 June to enquire whether the matter had been settled yet!

Other matters were trivial in comparison to these major issues, but they were no less relevant in their contribution to Beaverbrook's sense of frustration and injustice. Two officials were appointed for propaganda purposes by Beaverbrook: Commander Locker-Lampson to go to Russia and Mr. Perceval Landon to go to Mesopotamia. The Russian and Eastern Committees² both vetoed their respective appointments without giving any reasons. Beaverbrook wrote to Lloyd George complaining of this on 18 June;; on 24 June he tendered his resignation.

Eleven days before, Beaverbrook had written to Lloyd George, warning him of what was likely to happen.³ In a private covering note to his official memorandum on the Ministry of Information, Beaverbrook stated, 'My main reason for asking you to intervene personally rather than have the whole issue fought out in the War Cabinet, is that I very much doubt how much longer my health will allow me to retain office. I am nearly worn out with my effort to put this Ministry on its legs ...'⁴ In the memorandum, Beaverbrook made a clear statement as to what the main problems facing the ministry were:

The least difficulty is with the Foreign Office. This is because Lord Robert Cecil's whole intention is to be helpful. It follows that I should be glad of the chance of serving under him should the final decision point that way. All that we require, and urgently, is a firm definition of the relations and respective spheres of the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Information. Without some such definition of powers, which both parties would be compelled to observe, the present game of cross-purposes

1. 3 May 1918, Cab. 23/5/404/13, P.R.O.

2. special propaganda committees set up in the local area.

3. F/4/5/21, L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib.

4. *ibid.*

and inaction will go on for ever. 1

Cecil's objection to the ministry was that it was likely to pursue an independent foreign policy, whereas Beaverbrook believed that this was not necessary and that 'you can have a Ministry of semi-official propaganda following the Foreign Office in policy but carrying out that policy by a different method.'² Beaverbrook, however, was more concerned about other departments and proposed that if he be allowed to tackle them one by one, he would be able to achieve agreement without provoking all round bitterness. As far as the Press Bureau was concerned, all that was needed was for them to be told 'that we are a ministry charged with the duties and powers of publicity and not a Department subordinate to themselves'.³ Where the War Office was involved, Beaverbrook believed prompt agreement might be achieved, but this was not so in the case of the Admiralty which appeared to be 'the front of the resistance to any recognition of the functions of the new ministry. Whenever I make a request to Sir Eric Geddes,⁴ it is immediately and politely refused.'⁵ The main issue was one of information again, namely the use of the Secret Service. In the opinion of its head, the Ministry of Information could make enormous use from the political point of view of the political knowledge of this service, 'if only this knowledge were placed at its disposal'.⁶ The implication of Beaverbrook's argument was very clear, that the Ministry of Information should be put on an equality with all other Departments of State. The problem from the beginning had been that 'the sphere of the Ministry's work was not defined with sufficient clearness. No charter of rights and duties has been drawn up and the operations of the Ministry have been and continue to be interrupted with by other Departments of State over debatable spheres of work, influence and information.'⁷ Beaverbrook felt that in all the disputes that had taken place he had been the one to give way, while

1. F/4/5/21, L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib.

2. memorandum on the Ministry of Information, 13 June 1918, F/4/5/21, L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib.

3. *ibid.*

4. Sir Eric Geddes, 1875-1937, first lord of admiralty, 1917-18.

5. Beaverbrook memorandum.

6. *ibid.*

7. *ibid.*

the War Cabinet seemed unwilling to give him any redress.

'The Ministry is treated as a subordinate department without rights, and in consequence becomes so in fact.'¹

Under these circumstances, Beaverbrook's preparedness to resign was not surprising. On 25 June he wrote to Cecil concerning his offer to resign: 'Your kindness to me has been the only light spot in the arid waste of controversy in which I have been involved during the last four months.'² Beaverbrook offered to alter anything in his resignation letter if Cecil took exception to it, so long as it 'is consistent with the main facts and with my own dignity'.³ Beaverbrook asked that the letter be shown to Balfour to discover whether there was anything he objected to: 'I would even amend the reference to Lord Hardinge, though he has been a bitter and implacable obstacle to the success of this Ministry all through this business, rather than that you should think me ungrateful.'⁴ Beaverbrook recommended that the Ministry return under Foreign Office control and without any further dispute, for the last thing he wanted was further controversy. Beaverbrook promised, therefore, that he would never refer to the matter again either in the written or spoken word, so long of course as he himself was not attacked. 'As far as my influence with the Press goes, it will be exerted to the utmost to stop any controversy, and on this you may rely.'⁵

Beaverbrook's offer of resignation was the usual attempt to force a decision from the power that be, in this case the Prime Minister. Thus Lloyd George received a second communication from his Minister of Information on 1 July: 'on June 24 I tendered my resignation. Since then a week has elapsed and as there seems to be no prospect of the matter being cleared up, I must now, with regret, allow my resignation to take immediate effect.'⁶ This communication had its effect.

1. Beaverbrook to Lloyd George, 18 June 1918, F/2/268, L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib.

2. F/2/268 L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib.

3. *ibid.*

4. *ibid.*

5. *ibid.*

6. Beaverbrook to Lloyd George, 1 July 1918, F/2/268, L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib.

On 9 July a conference between Beaverbrook and Balfour was arranged by Lloyd George and a memorandum was issued as a result of this discussion.¹ Its main conclusions were that the Ministry of Information was an independent ministry for whose operations the Foreign Office had no responsibility; that there ought to be constant conference and consultation between the two; that it was the function of the Prime Minister and the War Cabinet to settle any differences between the two and that finally each was to supply the other with all the necessary and required information. This memorandum was sufficient to persuade Beaverbrook not to resign, for it had at least asserted the theoretical independence of his ministry. But in practice it left matters very much as they had been.

Ironically, the Foreign Office did not find the memorandum acceptable and it became clear to Beaverbrook that his original assessment as to where the 'front of resistance' lay to his new ministry was quite wrong. On 12 July Balfour wrote to the Prime Minister giving his reactions to the memorandum:

I am very anxious to arrive at a solution of the unfortunate difficulties which have arisen between Lord Beaverbrook and my Department. The conditions laid down in your memorandum would, however, I fear, not only result in increased friction but might seriously affect the constitutional position of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. We should end having two Ministers responsible to the Cabinet for Foreign Affairs. 2

Balfour then laid down his conditions for accepting the memorandum: firstly that the Foreign Office was to be consulted and the advice of the Foreign Secretary followed where any question of foreign policy was concerned; that officers engaged in propaganda work abroad were to keep in touch with the ambassador or minister, sending him copies of their reports when they concerned political conditions and that it should be understood that if any action of any officer seemed to a Foreign Office representative to interfere with the policy of the Secretary of State, it should be his duty to report the matter to the Foreign Office; thirdly, the Foreign Office was

1. memorandum from the Prime Minister, 9 July 1918, F/2/200, L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib.
2. F.O. 800/212, P.R.O.

to be consulted before important personages were sent to foreign countries in order that an opportunity might be given for ascertaining the views of Foreign Office diplomatic representatives on the proposed visit. If these conditions were fulfilled, Balfour was quite happy to leave the work of propaganda entirely in Beaverbrook's hands. The objections implicit in these conditions of Balfour were almost identical to those put forward by Cecil when a separate Department of Information had first been proposed. They had never accepted the setting up of a separate Ministry and Beaverbrook saw Balfour's rejection of the memorandum, which he considered to be a mild document, as an attempt to assert final supremacy of the Foreign Office over the ministry both in theory and in practice. In August, Beaverbrook wrote the following to Bonar Law:

The Foreign Office is the principal trouble. After receiving my memorandum, the Prime Minister endeavoured to effect a settlement between Mr. Balfour and myself. The attempt failed completely and at the end Mr. Balfour was advancing far stronger claims on behalf of the Foreign Office against the Ministry than had ever been made before the negotiation (sic.) commenced. 1

The administrative difficulties of the Ministry of Information continued unabated. On 19 July Beaverbrook complained to Lloyd George that cable messages concerning the Ministry of Information were being intercepted by the Press Bureau and sent to the Ministry via the Foreign Office. He insisted they be sent direct and in reply, Philip Kerr², on behalf of the Prime Minister, stated that this would be arranged.³ Kerr got in touch with Balfour who replied on 24 July that he agreed, provided the Foreign Office was always consulted with regard to foreign policy:

You state that the decision was in accordance with the arrangements come to with regard to the distribution of functions between the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Information. May I remind you that no distribution of

1. 28 Aug. 1918, 83/6/43, Bonar Law papers, Bbk. Lib.

2. Philip Henry Kerr, private secretary to Lloyd George, 1916-21.

3. 23 July 1918, F.O. 800/212, P.R.O.

functions has yet been determined. Mr. Balfour did not feel able to accept the proposals made by the Prime Minister and submitted counter suggestions of his own. He is still waiting for a reply to theses. 1

Cecil, too, was becoming impatient. On 29 July he wrote to Balfour:

The situation is becoming intolerable and unless Beaverbrook's activities are definitely confined to propaganda, properly so-called, it will be quite impossible to conduct any business. Here is one of his agents telegraphing through the D.M.I. to Beaverbrook affairs which are clearly in the province either of the War Office or the Foreign Office and are in fact being dealt with by the Russia committee. 2

Cecil added as a postscript that he would have to take to resigning again. The Foreign Office were as anxious as Beaverbrook that the position should be clarified finally. On 31 July, Balfour wrote to Lloyd George:

I am afraid that the relations between the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Information are getting into some confusion. If I rightly understand the activities of the latter office, they extend a good deal beyond anything which I, at least, have been accustomed to describe as propaganda, using that word even in the widest sense. 3

Balfour requested that the position be regularised according to the terms of his letter dated 12 July 1918.⁴ Lloyd George was in an impossible position. He had given his full backing to the new Ministry but could not ignore Balfour, who was well supported by other established ministries. He took the line of not doing anything. Balfour persisted, however. On 13 August, he wrote again asking Lloyd George for a decision saying that events had occurred since his previous letter, making further communication necessary.⁵ Beaverbrook also persisted in his complaints. When he had proposed sending Harry Lauder, the music-hall artist, on a propaganda tour of the U.S.A., he had also agreed that he should be accompanied

1. 24 July 1918, F.O. 800/212, P.R.O.

2. F.O. 800/212, P.R.O.

3. F.O. 800/212, P.R.O.

4. see above p. 74

5. F.O. 800/212, P.R.O.

by his wife and manager, as Lauder would not go without them. However, the Passport Committee refused to give either of the latter a passport and so Lauder refused to go. The Press Bureau was also causing trouble again. They were cutting out of the German wireless all insulting references to America or American troops, since all German wireless had to be relayed through Britain in order to reach the U.S.A. Beaverbrook felt that this was a great mistake in propagandist policy, but his Ministry had no voice in the matter. Beaverbrook also complained that he was not getting a sufficient supply of official documents. But an issue which involved both Beaverbrook and Balfour directly, was the Jewish question. On 22 August, Balfour wrote to the Prime Minister yet again:

I am sorry to bother you when you are on holiday but the question of the relationship between the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Information is becoming too difficult to allow the present position to continue. 1

What concerned Balfour was the issue of Zionism. The policy towards the Zionist movement had been laid down by him on 2 November 1917 and was subsequently approved by the cabinet:

I now find that Beaverbrook has written to you on the subject asking for a clear directive on Jewish policy. He states that he has done so because Sir Charles Henry told him that he had laid certain arguments before you which had impressed you and which you were taking into consideration; and meanwhile Zionist propaganda is being suspended. 2

Balfour was indignant and demanded that an immediate distribution of functions take place. This time a reply was forthcoming, from Wales, where the Prime Minister was holidaying, agreeing that the position should be regularised forthwith, 'otherwise friction and misunderstanding are inevitable',³ and adding that Henry must have misinterpreted Jewish policy and that he (Lloyd George) supported Balfour's Zionist position.⁴ Lloyd George promised to settle the matter when he came to London.

1. F.O. 800/212, P.R.O.

2. *ibid.*

3. Lloyd George to Balfour, 27 Aug. 1918, F.O. 800/212, P.R.O.

4. for a more detailed discussion, see Lord Beaverbrook, Men and Power 1917-1918 (London, 1956), p. 291 ff.

Quarrels with the Foreign Office were not Beaverbrook's only problem. Throughout his period in office, there was much criticism of his appointment as Minister on personal grounds. Lord Stanfordham, the King's personal secretary, wrote to the Chief Whip, Frederick Guest, on 8 February 1918, informing him that the King was surprised at Beaverbrook's appointment as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster being proposed to him, as this office was one that involved 'closer relations between the King and its Chancellor than with many of his ministers ...'¹ Lloyd George, in reply, gave Beaverbrook full backing, 'I wish you to assure His Majesty that I attach great importance to the appointment of Lord Beaverbrook to this post.'² This was to be only the first hurdle. Following upon the appointment of Northcliffe to control propaganda in enemy countries, there was a great outcry in Parliament, and an open attack upon the appointments was led by Austen Chamberlain, arguing that one could not have men in government posts who were also newspaper editors.³ The attack eventually died out, but it was revived in the August of 1918 following a long article in the Westminster Gazette, dated 30 July 1918, which called into question Beaverbrook's staffing of the Ministry and his policy. The Daily Chronicle of 7 August 1918 reiterated the criticism. Parliament then took up the cry focussing attention upon the finances of the Ministry. This came to nothing, however, mainly because of clever diversionary tactics by Beaverbrook's defenders.⁴ C.F.G. Masterman wrote to Beaverbrook⁵ congratulating him on the failure of the campaign and suggesting that the figure behind the attack was none other than Robert Donald: 'I suppose he wrote that Westminster Gazette article.' Beaverbrook replied:

You have quite correctly placed your finger on the source of all the real trouble in the Press - and so no doubt ultimately in Parliament ... It is really a very dirty and mendacious trick on the part of the person you mention,

1. F/9 Feb. 1918, F/29/2/6, L.G. papers, Bbk. Lib. - see also Beaverbrook, p.274.
2. *ibid.*
3. Hansard, 5th ser., CIII. 266, 458.
4. Beaverbrook, p.278.
5. 9 Aug. 1918, F/2/64, Bbk. papers, Bbk. Lib.

especially in view of the consideration shown him here in the past.

Beaverbrook survived all these attacks, though he came close to resignation on various occasions.² He overcame personal opposition more easily than the obstruction of the Foreign Office. Winston Churchill saw some humour in the situation when he wrote to Beaverbrook on 15 August 1918, underlining a report from Italy, to the effect that Sonnino, the Foreign Minister, and Gallenga, the head of propaganda, were having a dispute. The latter was accused of using his propaganda agents abroad as a means of carrying on an independent foreign policy of his own, and Sonnino threatened to resign. Churchill commented underneath the report:

Oh Max! For shame! Why have you been corrupting this unfortunate Gallenga? Deep answers unto deep. The coalition or combine of Propaganda ministers is a terrible reality. When is the big push going to be launched? ³

In the event, Beaverbrook could also treat the whole issue with some humour for the result of Lloyd George's investigations was a series of decisions in favour of the ministry. Lloyd George maintained that the Ministry should be supplied with official documents and that passports were to be granted without question. On 11 September, he issued a minute which made a clear statement about the powers of the ministry. He decided that photographs after censorship in France were to be sent direct to the Ministry; that the Press Bureau should accept instructions from the Ministry of Information as it accepted them from other ministries; that the German wireless was to be used by the Ministry of Information with no further censorship except that necessary for military or naval purposes.⁴ With all the ministries being informed of these details, the Ministry seemed to have arrived and Beaverbrook's constant struggle appeared to have been worth it. But the triumph was to

1. 10 Aug. 1918, F/2/64, Bbk. papers, Bbk. Lib.

2. for details of how near to resignation Beaverbrook was following Chamberlain's attack, see Beaverbrook, p.287 ff.

3. F/2/170, Bbk. papers, Bbk. Lib.

4. F/2a/1/2, Bbk. papers, Bbk. Lib.

be shortlived. After another month Beaverbrook became very ill and unable to continue as head of the Ministry. Arnold Bennett, his deputy, took over as director of propaganda. The Ministry itself was not to last much longer. As soon as the armistice was declared, the Ministry was wound up.

The liquidation of the Ministry which was completed on 31 December 1918, saw the Foreign Office re-establish control of propaganda. The War Cabinet directed that certain propaganda efforts be continued, the cables and wireless section, and the various national sections, with the emphasis upon getting news in the foreign press. In effect the old News Department was recreated without the large expenditure on publications. Propaganda was relegated in significance, as the Foreign Office had always desired, to being an offshoot of diplomacy.

Chapter 3 - Propaganda: Distribution and Methods

The propaganda bureau of 1914 was a relatively insignificant government department, whose secret workings meant that it attracted little attention from the press, the public or parliament. Wellington House rapidly established, however, a world-wide propaganda campaign, involving a variety of methods and distributing media.

The first form of propaganda exploited by Wellington House was the pamphlet. One of the two conferences summoned in September 1914 to discuss the institution of a programme to influence opinion abroad, consisted of well-known writers.¹ The idea behind the conference was not only to consult these masters of the written word upon the principles and content of propaganda, but also to obtain the tentative employment of potential pamphleteers.² It was intended that the pamphlets should be serious works, academic in tone and content, rather than polemical diatribes. Conscious that the brash methods of German publicity were to be avoided, Masterman required the pamphlets to be highly factual, so that the reader was allowed to reach his own conclusion on the evidence before him. Faith in pamphleteering was evident from the first report of the work carried out by Wellington House,³ issued in June 1915, which stated that since the beginning of the war, some two and a half million copies of books, pamphlets and other documentary forms of propaganda, had been circulated in seventeen different languages. By the time of the second report,⁴ in February 1916, the figure was seven million copies and it was specifically stated that fly-sheets were not employed, in contrast to the Germans who distributed them in vast and therefore wasted quantities.

1. see above, p.17, footnote 1.

2. Arnold Bennett, G.K. Chesterton, Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, John Masfield, Gilbert Murray and H.G. Wells, all wrote pamphlets for Wellington House. Bennett, Kipling and Wells were all employed in the Ministry of Information in 1918, with Bennett finishing as temporary director.

3. 1st Report of the Work of Wellington House, INF.4/5, P.R.O.

4. 2nd Report of the Work of Wellington House, INF.4/5, P.R.O.

Written propaganda, other than pamphlets and books by specific authors, consisted of official publications, such as the Bryce Report on German atrocities in Belgium; government white papers; ministerial speeches; messages from the King; and at the beginning of the war, the various official books produced by all the countries involved in the war giving details of and including extracts from the documents relating to the causes of the war.

Simply to produce this written material was not enough. Efficient distribution had to take place, on a large scale and on a broad front so that the material was available to be read in as many places as possible. Distribution was therefore varied. To reach the more remote parts of the globe, use was made of the steamship companies and their agencies. These agencies dealt with all the leading businessmen and their ramifications extended to every important branch of trade. Wellington House was able to reach even into the hinterland of South America through the agencies of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company and the Pacific Steam Navigation Company. Both North and South America were supplied through the Cunard and White Star Lines. Lamport and Holt and the Booth lines traded with Portuguese Brazil. Pamphlets to India were sent by the P & O line which also served Australia, to Canada by the Canadian Pacific and to South Africa by Union Castle. These same companies and others also aided in the distribution of pamphlets in Europe. The use of the companies' agents was important in preventing the dumping of vast loads of pamphlets. Production of pamphlets in large numbers necessitated bulk transportation, but they could be and were distributed on a smaller scale by the agents. They frequently enlisted the aid of voluntary organisations which existed in the country of destination, overseas clubs, patriotic leagues. In China, distribution took place through the Religious Tract Society, in the Balkans through insurance companies. Not all pamphlets went through the agencies of the shipping lines. Voluntary organisations in England helped send out pamphlets through their own private mailing list. This was most convenient, as it was an established principle that, in order to avoid the flooding methods of Germany, as much literature as possible should be sent on a person to

person basis. Thus Wellington House built up its own mailing list. The most vivid example of this was in America where Sir Gilbert Parker developed a mailing list of 13,000 names, all of them people of social importance, lawyers, lecturers, doctors, businessmen, politicians - the natural audience for the academic literature being sent them. The assistance of the Foreign Office was also obtained for it had its natural agents of distribution, the various ambassadors and consuls. Their task especially was to see that the pamphlets were placed in public places where they might be picked up and read, libraries, station waiting rooms, barbers' shops, doctors' surgeries and any other place where the public was likely to gather and have time to read. All these distributing bodies cooperated with each other to avoid unnecessary duplication, with Wellington House acting as the central distributing body, maintaining reasonable control in this way.

The principle common to all these distributing agencies was discretion. The use of the shipping lines whereby the shipping company distributed the literature enabled Wellington House to maintain secrecy. The literature did not appear to be coming from an official source. The person to person mailing system was even more beneficial in this way. To all 13,000 on his list, Sir Gilbert Parker was a personal correspondent and there was no apparent connexion between him and any official organisation in Britain. The publishers' names on the pamphlets were those of private companies and there was nothing in the way of stamps or any other sign to indicate a connexion with the British government.

The emphasis upon the use of the pamphlet itself was a reflection of the government's desire to be discreet, in contrast to the Germans: 'German attempts to influence Italian opinion only caused the greatest irritation, and the invitation extended to a number of Italian journalists to visit the German General Headquarters only called forth the bitterest sarcasm from the more dignified members of the Italian press.'¹ Any open methods of publicity therefore almost certainly meant

1. 1st Report Wellington House, p.19.

condemnation. Letters to the Italian press were tried such as G.K. Chesterton's Letters to an Old Garibaldian¹ published in Secolo, 'but owing to the attitude described above, we have had practically to abandon the attempt to work in this way, and to fall back upon the use of pamphlets'.² Much the same could be said of America where the open methods of the Germans lost all sympathy. The Americans resented being harangued and much preferred to make up their own minds on these issues.

The use of the pamphlet was based then on tradition and circumstances which were dictated more than anything by the reaction to German propaganda. Pamphlets were produced in great numbers and distributed quite efficiently over a wide area. They fitted conveniently the desire of the government to avoid open association with propaganda so that neutral countries could not feel that their opinion was being dictated in any way. But there does not appear to have been much consideration of the effectiveness of pamphlets, how widely they were read, what part of the population they were reaching. Masterman decided from the beginning, 'It is in the nature of the case that we cannot expect to be rewarded to any great extent by realising definite and overt results.'³ What effective means of measurement existed? Masterman recognised the limitations of propaganda in this respect, and in the face of this permanent uncertainty of the efficacy of the methods employed, maintained a vital flexibility which facilitated the very great expansion of propaganda that took place. Generalization at the expense of particular experience was never permitted. Thus in July 1915 Masterman accepted the advice of George Buchanan, British ambassador at Petrograd, who proposed working through the Press rather than pamphlets, which he felt were expensive and not widely read. Moreover with a population which was largely illiterate, any written propaganda was of dubious value. But as ever opinion conflicted, and in 1916 Harold Williams, one of the British propaganda representatives in Russia, considered booklets and pamphlets to be of great value there, in extending and deepening interest. At no time during the war was the effective measurement of the

1. published beginning of 1915. Published as a pamphlet in 1914

2. 1st Report Wellington House, p.19

3. 1st Report Wellington House, p.4.

influence of pamphlets attempted. Thus the numerous reports on propaganda which came to Wellington House or to the Foreign Office from the various propaganda agents or consuls could never give any information as to how widely read the pamphlets were.

The emphasis upon transmission of information by such means remained, however. Particular reference was made by various commentators to the need for a good supply of books in English both in libraries and in bookstalls, not necessarily propaganda, but text books in mathematics and science, and English literature, especially the more modern authors. In August 1917 the report entitled 'The Circulation of British Books, Periodicals and other similar means of communication in foreign countries',¹ demonstrated how far British bookselling methods were behind those of Germany, in the rest of Europe. There was little in the way of advanced sales technique, such as a sale or return basis, or established display rooms. There was no book trade clearing house as the Germans had in Leipzig. This state of affairs was not directly the fault of the various propaganda organisations, as various schemes for improving our bookselling abroad were proposed. The problem was to obtain the agreement of the publishers. Neither the proposal of a sale or return basis for their book supplies, nor long-term credit facilities appealed to them as likely to advance profits. Rennell Rodd, the ambassador at Rome, proposed the establishment of a central depot at Milan to which British publications could be sent and whence catalogues and advertisements would be issued all over Italy.² Such an organisation would naturally require a government subvention. Corresponding distribution centres were proposed for Holland, Switzerland and Scandinavia. Rodd contrasted German accounts which were settled yearly with the quarterly and half-yearly accounts of British publishers. German catalogues were more in evidence and of better quality. Ernest Maxse, the consul-general at Rotterdam, commented, 'the great fault of English firms is that they will not print and publish catalogues in the language of the country in which they wish to deal.'³

1. see above, page 15, footnote 1.

2. letter to Foreign Office, 15 May 1916, F.O. 395/44, P.R.O.

3. Letter to Foreign Office, 23 May 1916, F.O. 395/44, P.R.O.

In order to try to involve the publishers, Ernest Gowers and William Nugent of Wellington House held talks with publisher Geoffrey Williams of Williams and Norgate. It was to be his task to get the publishers to set up a scheme for the more efficient distribution of books and he was empowered to offer government support up to £1,000. Using him as an intermediary was effective as he was able to arouse more interest. However, Williams asked the government to increase their subsidy to £5,000, for the scheme was likely to cost £25,000 and the publishers were not interested unless the government put forward a substantial subsidy to cover the first few years when there seemed to be little prospect of a commercial profit.¹ The Treasury were unwilling to provide such a sum, arguing that the scheme 'should be regarded as the reorganisation of the export trade methods of a wealthy industry which should well be able to afford some initial loss for the sake of future advantage.'² Williams persisted in his efforts but nothing came of them, nor were any of Rodd's suggestions followed up.

The real interest demonstrated in pamphlets and books reflected a concern about what Rennell Rodd termed 'intellectual propaganda'. But in terms of propaganda being widely read, there seemed little prospect that pamphlets and books were the right medium. Political pamphlets had had great currency in the past only when newspapers were rare or lacked a sufficiently literate audience. Where there was literacy then a powerful press usually existed and this was acknowledged by the various British propaganda agencies. The significance of the press was not confined to domestic propaganda. It was an essential consideration in any propaganda campaign in allied and neutral countries. The policy was to place the propaganda in the foreign press in as discreet a fashion as possible. In this way a vast audience might be reached in most countries. Buchanan expressed a very real preference for using the newspapers in Russia rather than pamphlets. In China, Sir James Jordan, ambassador at Peking, advocated the use of the local press in order to reach the vernacular press readers since 'every Chinaman from the highest to the beggar in rags

1. Letter to Foreign Office, 10 July 1916, F.O. 395/44, P.R.O.
 2. letter to Foreign Office, 24 Oct. 1916, F.O. 395/44, P.R.O.

reads the press.'¹ The same was true of Japan. In France, Spain, Italy and Holland, the press was a very powerful influence and every attempt was made to exploit the press to the full as a medium of propaganda.

The principles involved in this were carefully established. The newspaper either at home or abroad was never looked upon as simply the vehicle for unadulterated government propaganda. One could not pretend to democratic forms of government and allow such manipulation of the press that it might be exposed and used as counter-propaganda. Thus at home the press was given a remarkably free rein. The Foreign Office gave up the right to censorship during the war in recognition of the principle that newspapers should censor themselves. The attitude of the Foreign Office and Wellington House was equally sensitive in respect of the foreign press.

Masterman always maintained that propaganda should consist of the truth and the main concern of Wellington House was that the foreign press should be supplied with full and accurate information about the war. Dissemination of the news of the day was to be the responsibility of a specific organisation, the Home Office Neutral Press Committee. The idea was not to plant articles or information by British writers, but, as was stated especially in the case of America, to encourage the press correspondents in England 'to take a right view of the actions of the British Government since the commencement of the war'.² 'Right view' is of course open to wide interpretation but the principle was, again with special reference to America, to allow the correspondents to write their own articles in their own way subject to censorship. The feeling was that if the Americans felt we were attempting to persuade them through their own press to take a particular view, then their reaction would be such that the whole propaganda campaign would be placed in jeopardy. Having cut the cables carrying German communications to America, Britain monopolised the information that was sent, so American correspondents had to come to England. But the monopoly did not mean they could

1. report to Foreign Office, November 1914, F.O. 371/1950, P.R.O.
 2. 1st report Wellington House, p.2.

only obtain information through Britain and it would have been fatal to supply them with false or truncated information which might then be exposed through some other information source. The British had to be accurate and by gaining respect, could expect to be able always to put their viewpoint before the American press. Their case was special, as American neutrality and eventual possible support was valued above all else where allied and neutral propaganda was concerned. Thus Wellington House and Sir Gilbert Parker took specific responsibility for dealing with the vast number of American newspapers. Parker counted 512 newspapers, 350 of them local journals, and made sure that as many as possible were supplied with the varied propaganda literature that he received. In London correspondents were accorded interviews with leading figures in the government and in the forces. The facilities at first provided, however, compared unfavourably with those proffered by the Germans, who were lavish in their entertainment of correspondents, American in particular. Wellington House was hampered in all this. The arrangement of interviews was the task of the Foreign Office and their content was not always of the kind wished for by the Americans who sought 'heart throb' stories and who were always after an interview with the King, especially when they had been accorded one with the Kaiser.¹ The censorship exercised in the early years of the war tended to be very strict and the War Office proved particularly obstructive over the kind and amount of news they supplied. In the early years of the war, G.H.Q. opposed the visits to the front by foreign correspondents. All this was not the fault of propaganda organisation, but there were too many separate bodies dealing with the question of the foreign press and it was not surprising that in 1916 Gilbert Parker wrote to the News Department of the Foreign Office requesting a closer cooperation.² Parker pointed out that he often knew nothing of the content of an interview until he read an account of it in the newspapers. An attempt was made to improve liaison between propaganda bodies in the reorganisation of spring 1916 when the work of the Neutral Press Committee was incorporated in the work of the Foreign Office News Department, while Wellington House also came under its direction. Every attempt was made to improve the service

1. C.F.G. Masterman, memorandum to Foreign Office, on work in USA, 6 Mar. 1916, F.O. 395/2833, P.R.O.
 2. 1 May 1916, F.O. 395/2833, P.R.O.

the correspondents received. Interviews were placed on a more regular basis. The correspondents were able to visit the Foreign Office daily for information concerning current matters. Every week Lord Robert Cecil, the Under-Secretary of State, made himself available for interview, as did General Maurice at the War Office. In addition there were various interviews with ministers. G.H.Q. permitted the attachment of a permanent American correspondent at the front, Mr. Frederick Palmer. At first confined to America, this privilege of having credited press correspondents at the front was extended to other countries, both allied and neutral.¹ John Buchan persuaded the Foreign Office of the wisdom of this measure and in turn, the Foreign Office negotiated with G.H.Q., who permitted France to send three representatives, Italy, Japan and Russia one each. The French, however, were beset by internal strife as to which newspaper should send a journalist and proposed a rota system which G.H.Q. accepted. They also had the number increased to four. The Italians also asked for increased representation and were allowed two. The Japanese decided not to avail themselves of the opportunity.

Countries which did not have permanent correspondents at the front, had to rely upon occasional visits. Organised visits to the front were an important feature of the facilities provided for journalists by British propagandists. The War Office relaxed their objection to them in 1916, though the Foreign Office still did not find the War Office very helpful after this decision. Miles Lampson² observed that the facilities provided were at an 'irreducible minimum'.³ Nevertheless, in June 1916, at least one party of journalists was being sent out each week, with a Foreign Office representative as a guide and with John Buchan, in France, improving their reception. Not only journalists paid such visits. Various public figures from Europe and America were shown the front lines: D'Annunzio, General Primo Rivera, the representatives of the Russian Duma, and many more. In May 1916, the Duma representatives made an official visit to Britain.

1. 10 Sept. 1916, F.O. 395/51, P.R.O.

2. Miles Wedderburn Lampson, assistant clerk in Foreign Office, 1915, acting first secretary at Peking embassy 1917-18.

3. minute, 2 June 1916, F.O. 395/39, P.R.O.

They visited the front in two separate parties for five days at a time, and also toured munitions factories, training camps and other places of interest in Britain. They also spent a day visiting the Grand Fleet, before going on to Paris.¹ Such visits were an excellent form of propaganda, but could go sadly astray, as when two Spanish journalists were given a guided tour. They were reported to be 'dirty and ill-mannered', 'they made water in the W.C. in any place that suited them'. One when given a gas-mask adopted an appearance of terror which he retained for the rest of the day; the other acted more like a souvenir hunter, delaying the party of which he was a member while he carved his name in a tree.² They were the exception, however, and visits to the front justified the extension of facilities in 1917, when the Department of Information financed four chateaux for correspondents and visitors to the front: one for British and American correspondents; one for American correspondents and visitors; a third for Allied correspondents and visitors; and one for persons on short visits.

The improvement of facilities for press correspondents and visitors to the front was initiated through consideration of propaganda in America, but its extension to allied countries reflected arrangements that were being made in late 1915 and 1916 to render more effective the flow of information between the allies, the neglect of public opinion in France and Russia having aroused much criticism. In both France and Russia the common opinion was that Britain was not contributing sufficiently to the war effort and it was therefore essential that both countries be supplied with information that would demonstrate the contrary. In April 1916, H.A.L. Fisher and Gerald L. Gould (head of the department dealing with French propaganda at Wellington House) visited La Maison de la Presse, the French organisation corresponding to Wellington House. The purpose of the visit was 'to find out what they are doing there, to tell them what we are doing and to arrange for cooperation, both as regards propaganda in France itself and also as regards propaganda in other countries'.³ It was arranged that various

1. file on Duma visit, F.O. 395/2825, P.R.O.

2. Foreign Office minutes, 10 Apr. 1916, F.O. 371/2826, P.R.O.

3. Fisher's Report to the Foreign Office, 6 Apr. 1916, F.O. 371/2842, P.R.O.

material should be exchanged including pamphlets and photographs, that both organisations should exchange lists of addressees, and most important, that they should help each other in the placing of articles in their respective presses. The French were more advanced in their dealings with their own press as the French Foreign Office had possessed a Bureau de la Presse for over eighteen years. The main work of the Maison de la Presse was the direction of the press in France. The Section Diplomatique had one bureau open from 10-12 a.m. and from 4-7 p.m. for the reception of foreign journalists; one bureau to prepare news items for the press; one bureau for the analysis of the press. The military section provided military information which included photographs. There was a section which examined the foreign press and a section concerning itself with propaganda abroad. Captain Millet, who headed the Section Anglaise, personally directed the placing of British articles in the French press, including Parisian dailies and the provincial press. In July 1916 it was suggested that a press agency be established in Paris by the British, but the ambassador, Lord Bertie, was not keen, arguing that the press was corrupt and that there was little point in entering into discussion with the French government about the issue, as the ministries changed so frequently there was little continuity in their ideas.

In Russia, the ambassador, Buchanan, took a less cynical view of the press, and placed considerable emphasis upon the influencing of it. More determined and organised efforts were made in December 1915 and in early 1916 a bureau was set up in Moscow under the direction of Bruce Lockhart and Mr. Lykiadopoulos, to deal with the Russian provincial press. The policy adopted was of sending each newspaper a bulletin of separate and original news rather than sending round a general circular. This rule was maintained even where there was more than one newspaper in the town. The bulletins themselves were 180-200 words long. Articles of any greater length were not of much use because of the shortage of paper.

The Foreign Office were inclined to follow Buchanan's example rather than listen to Bertie's advice, but they

demonstrated a sensitivity towards influencing the foreign press which they acquired through their experiences of American propaganda. Therefore, in 1916 when the Foreign Office stepped up its campaign in the foreign press, it generally sought to avoid taking the step of newspaper control or even the subsidising of a newspaper in a foreign country, whether the country was allied or neutral. The proposal to set up a newspaper in Switzerland in November 1915 was rejected as being too obvious a method of propaganda.¹ Any link between a paper and a foreign government would be bound, in the opinion of the Foreign Office, to bring the paper into disrepute which would defeat the object, to make the newspaper a respected disseminator of news about the war. In France, in July 1916, unofficial sources suggested that control might be gained of Le Petit Journal or even Le Temps, but the Foreign Office rejected this.² It was too easy to excite the jealousy of native journalists. Rodd expressed similar views in Italy. It was a great problem getting articles placed in the Italian press but this was explained by the paper shortage and thus the lack of room. His recommendation fitted in well with the principles applied to the American press which was that the best thing was to rely on Italian journalists to write their own articles which were likely to have much more currency.³

The Foreign Office did not adhere rigidly to this position, however. In Japan, Robertson Scott, in April 1916, proposed the creation of a new newspaper, though magazine might also describe the publication. He argued that the Japanese were great newspaper readers and that it was no good working through English papers as their total circulation was only about 5,000 daily and they were read mostly by foreigners who were without influence. Scott proposed therefore a 'live' monthly review, with an English version opposite each Japanese page.⁴ The ambassador to Tokyo, Sir Cunningham Greene, opposed the idea that the government should finance the review, but suggested someone else be persuaded to put up the money. A businessman,

1. Foreign Office minutes, 9 Nov. 1915, F.O. 371/2579, P.R.O.

2. Foreign Office minutes, 26 July 1916, F.O. 395/19, P.R.O.

3. Rodd to Foreign Office, 2 Sept. 1916, F.O. 395/20, P.R.O.

4. Scott to Montgomery, 23 Apr. 1916, F.O. 395/17, P.R.O.

C.V. Sales, with substantial interests in the East, was asked by the government to put up the money, the government suggesting that they might aid him via tax relief. Sale agreed, proposing that the money be vested in the British Association of Japan and that any profit should go to various objects, perhaps, above all, the study of the Japanese language. The Inland Revenue were wary of the tax relief idea as it would mean too many other people getting to know, and as an alternative they suggested that the money should be paid from Secret Service funds and could be credited to the Inland Revenue as part satisfaction of Super Tax or Excess Profits Duty.¹ Following lengthy negotiations, the Anglo-Japanese Review Shin Toyo or The New East, was established in February 1917.² Scott set about the acquisition of material, and the first issue appeared 15 June 1917. Its reception was generally hostile. The quality of the translations was questioned. G.H. Mair considered the review to be very badly done.³ Moreover, in the review, Scott made criticisms of the Japanese government. As a result, in November 1917, the Tokyo Propaganda Committee gave Scott a dressing down on the subject of the Review in general. Scott was certainly unpopular with the British community in Japan and he did not take kindly to criticism. Charles Wingfield, head of the Tokyo committee, described Scott as 'highly strung, excitable and resentful of any kind of advice or interference'.⁴ The New East was very unsuccessful, even though a London committee was appointed to exercise more control over Scott. By July 1918 Scott was unable to meet his financial obligations. By December The New East was being wound up, as neither the Foreign Office nor the London Committee (which included Sale) was prepared to put in any more money.

The Foreign Office was to depart from its normal practice in other countries as well. In South America and in Greece, the Foreign Office did give subsidies to newspapers in order to maintain support for the allies. In South America the amounts were very small, usually not more than £20 a month,

1. letter to Foreign Office, 30 July 1916, F.O. 395/17, P.R.O.

2. Scott to Foreign Office, 22 Feb 1917, F.O. 395/91, P.R.O.

3. Mair to Montgomery, 2 Nov. 1917, F.O. 395/91, P.R.O.

4. Wingfield to Montgomery, 9 Jan. 1918, F.O. 395/168, P.R.O.

which would be given through the taking up of advertising space.¹ In Greece, however, the sums involved were more substantial. The allies supported Venizelos in his struggle against the King because of the strategic importance of Greece. When the Venizelist government was removed from power at the end of 1916, just as the Salonika landings took place, the allies were placed in a most awkward position as the King reversed previous policy. The allies were therefore determined to do everything in their power to help Venizelos return to power. Thus when Sir Francis Elliot, the ambassador at Athens, proposed in 1916 that where a Greek newspaper which was favourable to the allies found itself in financial difficulties it should be given financial support, the Foreign Office agreed. A sum of £500 per month was approved, though Elliot considered this amount insufficient at a time when propaganda required intensification. During 1917, commitments grew steadily. In March 1917, Elliot proposed the free supply of printing paper to the Venizelist press. Already various subsidies were being paid: to Patris and Estis 3,000-5,000 drachmes each per month; to Ethnos 3,000; to Ethniki and Astir 2,000 each; and to Nea Hellas 1,500. According to Elliot payments were varied and purposely irregular 'to facilitate suspension of payments at any time and to prevent any paper acquiring a feeling of permanent dependence on my support'.² No payment was made directly from the Legation. Instead there was created the myth of a group of patriotic Greeks in England upon whose behalf all payments were made. Provincial newspapers, with the exception of occasional assistance to their Athens correspondents, were only paid for advertisements, but all Venizelist provincial newspapers without correspondents in the capital were supplied free with the daily news from Athens by telegram. It was estimated that the total cost of subsidies and telegrams was £650 per month. The new proposal concerning the supply of paper was estimated as costing £800-£1,000 per month. But this expense and the rather exceptional attitude towards the subsidising of newspapers was explained by the political situation in Greece.

1. July 1917, F.O. 395/74, P.R.O.

2. Elliot to Foreign Office, 28 Mar. 1917, F.O. 395/87, P.R.O.

Internal circumstances also dictated the British attitude towards the press in Holland. The Dutch were very nervous about their neutrality and they wished to avoid anything which related to open propaganda. Most propaganda articles for the press were prohibited. This effect was achieved through the severe penal code whereby the authorities could punish very severely any act that might endanger the relations of Holland with those of any other country. In 1917, the editor of the Telegraf was imprisoned for three months for having 'endangered the neutrality of the Netherlands by stating that the war had been made by "the scoundrels of the Centre of Europe"'.¹ In circumstances such as this, all that could be done was to ensure a regular and accurate supply of information and for this the various propaganda organisations relied upon Reuters. Reuters' service to twenty-seven Dutch newspapers, both central and provincial, was absolutely vital in maintaining a constant supply of information from England to counteract the predominant influence wielded by the Wolff bureau, the Germans having the natural advantage of geographical proximity. Reuters were an integral and indispensable part of propaganda work. The telegraph was one of the main media for the flow of information from England to the rest of the world. The government took immediate steps at the commencement of war to employ the world-wide facilities offered by Reuters and this company became a semi-official organisation, working independently of Wellington House and the Foreign Office in the early years, but transmitting the information supplied by the government. There was no source of conflict here, as the government's desire was not to tamper with the information in any way, but to make sure that it was quickly and efficiently transmitted. In 1916 Reuters were sending over half a million words a month: ten thousand a month to Argentina and a similar amount to other South American countries; thirty-two thousand words a month to Shanghai; and twenty thousand words a month to Holland and equally significant supplies of news to Spain, Sweden, Egypt and Persia. All this work was a special service provided for the government. In addition to it, Reuters sent their own independent news supply which served most countries of the world to whom the British wished to direct information. In addition to Reuters,

1. Report from Ernest Maxse to Foreign Office, 23 March 1917, F.O. 395/100, P.R.O.

the Foreign Office sent its own telegrams, chiefly to consular representatives while G.H. Mair's Neutral Press Committee, early in the war, also sent out telegrams, as well as preparing some of the Reuters cables for transmission. Mair also organised the exchange of news services between various notable European papers. Thus The Times exchanged news with Novoye Vremya of Petrograd; The Morning Post transmitted news to Rumania and Greece and exchanged a shorter version of this transmission with National Tidende of Copenhagen; The Daily Telegraph had a similar arrangement with another Danish paper Vortland; while the Daily Chronicle exchanged messages with Corriere d'Italia. Special agencies were established to receive and distribute the information to the newspapers. Thus there was an English Telegraph Agency at Bucharest; agencies at Bilbao and Valencia which were to be supplied daily with telegraphic news by Mair; and others at Basle, Cairo, Amsterdam and all the important centres for receiving telegraphic news.

News was not only transmitted via cables. From October 1914, G.H. Mair arranged for the transmission of wireless messages through a government contract with the Marconi Company. By the terms of this, messages of 200-300 words in length were attached to the news message sent out by Marconi from the wireless station at Poldhu to all shipping equipped with receivers. These propaganda messages were also sent out from the Admiralty wireless station at Carnarvon. This arrangement continued for a year until the Press Bureau complained that Marconi's own messages were being sent alongside government messages. Consequently they were separated. The government message was sent out in a protracted form between 12 p.m. and 2 a.m. from Carnarvon, while Marconi was at liberty to use portions of this message in its own broadcast from Poldhu. The arrangements for receiving the messages were, however, almost non-existent. Marconi had arranged for agents to receive the messages in Spain and the Canary Islands and there was some evidence of the messages being recorded in Bucharest,¹ but only intermittently and it was not clear that the receiver there was suitable. In Norway and Greece, it was found

1. memorandum to Foreign Office by G.H. Mair, 11 Sept. 1916, F.O. 371/2833, P.R.O.

impossible to get messages taken down owing to restrictions upon the use of wireless by the governments concerned. The messages could be heard in Egypt, Petrograd and of course in Italy and France and sometimes could be heard at Glace Bay in America. Mair put forward various suggestions to improve on this. In addition to the normal long-wave transmissions which were necessary to reach the Near East, a supplementary message could be sent out on a commercial wavelength preferably in German to reach the German population. It was important that definite agencies be set up to receive the transmissions while a new French receiver could be employed which required no mast or aerials and which anyone who knew morse code might use. Mair did propose reaching Japan by wireless messages going via India, Ceylon, Singapore and Hong Kong. But wireless was only in its infancy and the news transmitted by this medium was of minimal importance compared with other media, but it demonstrated the flexibility of those who organised propaganda, and their readiness to apply any method that existed for supplying news about the progress of the war.

How far all these various methods to supply allied and neutral newspapers were successful is impossible to measure. The criticisms levelled at them were many though usually they concerned the content of the propaganda or the quality of the news rather than a comment on the method of supplying the information. Reuters were often criticised for not supplying the right kind of information, but perhaps the major problem was that the variety of methods employed to supply foreign newspapers with news often led to duplication and waste. It was partly to eradicate this waste and also to improve the service to the foreign press which was considered to be more vital than ever as a method of propaganda, that in 1917 under the direction of John Buchan at the Department of Information, considerable reorganisation took place, involving particularly the creation of a number of press bureaux.

The idea of a press bureau was not of course a new one. The Germans had already demonstrated how effective their use might be. In Sweden, they were able to monopolise the supply of news through the Bjornson bureau and through the Svenska Telegram bureau. The allies effected counter-measures. A

naturalised American, Bjorkmann, became our press representative and with Esme Howard, ambassador at Stockholm, met with the French ambassador and his press representative to discuss the establishment of an efficient press agency. It was suggested that Bjorkmann become a Reuters agent which would be a suitable cover and that Reuters break their contact with the Svenska bureau, transferring to the new bureau the Stockholms Telegrambyra'.¹ Similar proposals were put forward in Switzerland by the ambassador, Grant-Duff,² following discussion with both the French and Italians. A bureau was also set up at Basle under a Swiss journalist, Berlinger. Both these early bureaux concentrated on telegraphic information, but were also involved in the preparation and placing of articles in the press of their respective countries. Nevertheless, progress in this direction was slow and it was demonstrated by H.A.L. Fisher and Gerald Gould how much further advanced was the Maison de la Presse.³

In June 1917, a press committee was established in Paris. Its task was to advise the Department of Information what propaganda was especially needed in Paris and the provincial papers and the form it should take. The committee was also to facilitate the placing of British propaganda in the French press through personal contacts with French editors and journalists. The committee was to be made up of journalists: Adam of The Times, Kerr Bruce of Reuters and Jerrold of The Daily Telegraph. This committee was later to act as the advisory committee to the new propaganda bureau set up in Paris in October, as press work was recognised as the main function of the bureau. In Italy, a similar development took place. In July 1917, following an investigation instituted by John Buchan, a new propaganda bureau was established in Rome. The main work of the agent in charge, Thorold, was with the press for which no one had previously held responsibility. In Holland, at the end of 1917, Steward at Rotterdam, brought off the purchase of the whole of the issue of shares in N.V.A.W. Segvoers Lutgevers Maatschappij which held the concession for running newspaper kiosks in Hague and Schevengen. There were

1. Report from Esme Howard to Foreign Office, 10 Sept. 1915, F.O. 371/2562, P.R.O.
 2. Grant-Duff to Montgomery, 27 Aug. 1915, F.O. 371/2563, P.R.O.
 3. see above, p.90, footnote 3.

17 kiosks altogether with another 9 under consideration. They were to be used as distribution centres and Steward, himself a journalist representing the Daily News, had just beaten the Germans to this particular business deal.¹ In Switzerland, it was recommended by the acting-consul at Zurich, Mr. Beak, that a press bureau be set up in German Switzerland for the more efficient placing of articles in the Swiss press, for better prepared articles to be written and for a closer examination of the foreign press. The bureau was established in September 1917 and the idea was extended to French-speaking Switzerland when Hubert Walter was asked to set up a bureau in Geneva in October 1917. Eventually it was intended that he should take overall control of propaganda in Switzerland. He was to concentrate on the press, preparing articles himself, commissioning Swiss journalists to write articles and distributing the more elaborate articles prepared by Mair.² In the United States the British Pictorial Service was established under Geoffrey Butler, and one of his main tasks was to improve the supply of information to the American press.³

All the above developments reflected the increasing emphasis placed upon influencing the foreign press in the latter years of the war, partly the effect of the infusion of more journalists into positions of authority in the Department, later Ministry, of Information. But the original controllers of propaganda at Wellington House were not blind to the newer methods of propaganda and though they never lost their faith in propaganda by pamphlet, they exploited new ideas to the full, often in combination. Wellington House introduced and published its own newspapers, with concentration not on the printed word, but upon pictorial reproduction. They were illustrated newspapers modelled on and printed on the rollers of the Illustrated London News. First mentioned in the 2nd report of Wellington House,⁴ they became one of the most applauded mediums of British propaganda. Their obvious quality was their attractiveness, their superior presentation and lay-out as compared with pamphlets and newspapers without

1. Steward to Foreign Office, 13 Dec. 1917, F.O. 395/100, P.R.O.
 2. Memorandum by A.W.G. Randall, head of Swiss section in Wellington House, 13 Oct. 1917, F.O. 395/124, P.R.O.
 3. Butler to Montgomery, 6 July 1917, F.O. 395/79, P.R.O.
 4. Feb. 1916, p.3, INF. 4/5, P.R.O.

illustrations. Four such papers were listed in the report: America Latina, which was produced monthly and distributed by the diplomatic and consular officers in Spain and South America: O Espelho, which was produced fortnightly in Portuguese and 15,000 copies of which were sent to Brazil: Hesperia, published weekly in Greek and sent to over 15,000 addresses and Al Hakitat,¹ published fortnightly in Arabic, Persian and Hindustani for the East. By September,² still more new editions were introduced. A completely new venture was introduced in the form of the War Pictorial which was published monthly with all the latest war pictures, with commentary in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Russian, Greek, Danish, Swedish, Dutch and German. Al Hakitat was continued as before, though in Turkish as well as the other three languages: America Latina was published fortnightly, alternately in Paris for the French government and in London: O Espelho and Hesperia as before. A new edition called Cheng Pao was published fortnightly for distribution in China while a Japanese edition, Senji Gaho was in preparation. Two months after the publication of the 3rd Wellington House report, the publication of Satya Vani was undertaken, published in four languages, Bengali, Hindi, Gujarati and Tamil.

In initiating the illustrated newspaper, Wellington House were probably more forced than forcing. In February 1915, the Brazil Press Association sought Treasury aid to continue the publication of O Espelho, which was run by a small company determined to counteract a highly active German press campaign. The treasury and the Foreign Office responded quickly to this request and it was decided not only that it was vital that the paper should continue but that it should be published in Britain where it would be cheaper and where more up to date photographic material was available. The Foreign Office were prepared to distribute the paper through their consuls and they also approached various British firms in order to obtain advertisement revenue. The paper was intended not only to act as a medium of propaganda in wartime but as an encouragement to better trade relations which might be expanded after the war.

-
1. Al Hakitat was published in one edition with translations in all three languages in the same issue.
 2. 3rd report Wellington House, F.O. 371/2837, P.R.O.

The paper, taken over by Wellington House, soon achieved a fair circulation as the consul-general at Rio reported, though he was doubtful as to how far it actually influenced public opinion.¹ By June 1915 the Foreign Office invited the French to contribute, though the paper was not yet financially secure. Consistent appraisal of the paper is difficult to obtain and there was much controversy over various of the illustrated newspapers. America Latina was heavily criticised for the poor quality of its Spanish letter press. Masterman was heavily criticised and various academics such as Professor Fitzmaurice Kelly were quoted as having stated that the translations contained numerous blunders and that the paper could hardly have been produced by an educated Spaniard. In August 1916 the attack was taken up in Parliament, when Sir James Walton M.P. despaired of the large sums of money that were involved, and claimed that Masterman spent £600 per month on the paper and that he was receiving considerable sums of money for this through the secret service fund. Henry Cust of the Committee of Patriotic Organisations,² a constant critic of Wellington House, had much to do with the campaign against America Latina. He believed that America Latina was receiving £20,000 a year. He was constantly criticising the translations, perhaps because he was involved in the production of a rival paper in South America, Hispania, which was in financial troubles and was seeking a government subsidy, which if given was likely to be at the expense of America Latina. The Foreign Office scrupulously examined the criticisms and obtained the opinion of Senor de Arteaga, reader in Spanish at Oxford, who, while recognizing some faults believed, 'that from the point of view of literature ... there was nothing in it, which could prevent its being read with pleasure.'³ Professor Kelly, of Liverpool University, later revised his own criticisms so that there was nothing left resembling his original wholesale condemnation. America Latina was not the only paper to suffer comment of this kind. Al Hakiyat was also condemned for serious translation errors in the captions beneath the photographs. In the Turkish captions, Lord Kitchener appeared

1. O'Sullivan-Beare to Foreign Office, 10 April 1915, F.O. 371/2555, P.R.O.

2. see above, page 20 ff.

3. Newton to Montgomery, 28 Mar. 1916, F.O. 395/41, P.R.O.

as a private soldier, while in the Persian captions, the Aga Khan instead of being a sincere friend to England was described as being married to her, while the firing of a torpedo was translated as the divorce of a shell.¹ But though such mistranslations as these did exist, they were not so serious that they meant the complete discrediting of the papers themselves. On the contrary, their expansion during the war in terms of production and distribution testified to their popularity. 50,000 copies of Cheng Pao were being distributed fortnightly in China by September 1916. By November 1917, the figure was 216,000 per month. This paper was very popular amongst Chinese minorities in South America, particularly in Ecuador. 75,000 copies of Al Hakitat were distributed each fortnight all over the world, Asia, Africa, South America, with great success. Illustrated propaganda was particularly relevant amongst the semi-literate populations of Asia, though ambassador Buchanan did not feel this was true in Russia, as he rejected the idea of an illustrated newspaper in Russia in October 1916. When the first issue of War Pictorial came out in 1916, Buchanan refused to allow its distribution in Russia until he had examined it. By October 1917 he had changed his mind, when he proposed a weekly illustrated newspaper for circulation amongst the Russian troops both at the front and the rear, justifying this alteration in position on the grounds that the revolution necessitated changes in methods. By November 1917, the circulation of War Pictorial was 750,000 per month, 109,500 in English, 316,000 in French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, 41,700 in French, Greek and Russian, 36,000 in Danish, 64,000 in Swedish, 176,500 in French and Dutch, 17,500 in French and 26,500 in German. Generally praise for these Wellington House publications was high though not always welcome as in August 1916, when an Article in The Daily Telegraph congratulated His Majesty's Government on the publication of Al Hakitat and Cheng Pao. The Foreign Office was much put out by this as it wished to maintain secrecy concerning the link between the government and these publications. The leakage was due to an indiscreet letter from Edward Long at Wellington House to the editor of The Daily Telegraph, Lord Burnham, which he had failed to mark private. But at least satisfaction was gained from the praise accorded these

1. Bertie to Montgomery concerning Persian minister in Paris, 1 July 1916, F.O. 395/18, P.R.O.

publications and in 1917 further new editions were produced; Warta Yang Tulus in Malay and Jangi Akhbar. The latter was the result of reorganizing other papers. Urdu was taken out of Al Hekitat and Hindi from Satya Vani and this new paper produced with Hindi-Urdu for the United Provinces in India and Gurumkhi for the Sikhs, an attempt to relate the paper to special linguistic areas.

The Illustrated newspapers were a much exploited method of propaganda. They had to be very heavily subsidised as they were generally distributed free or for a minimum sum. When in 1917 the India Office decided to remove its subsidy from Satya Vani, Wellington House was prepared to attempt the commercial sale of the paper as its circulation warranted business confidence. The illustrated newspaper was an ideal means of communication with extra-European countries where information was not expected to reach them quickly from Europe. The need for propaganda in areas such as South America, Asia and the Dominions was less pertinent than elsewhere, though it was vital at the same time that any German propaganda should be answered. The illustrated papers fulfilled this function, giving full information concerning developments in the war and demonstrating the role that England was playing. Their emphasis on the pictorial was much more likely to appeal to a large public opinion than the pamphlet which would circulate only amongst the more educated. In European countries the people were more literate and also demanded a daily flow of news. Large photographic presentations involved too much preparation to be effective in this way. Only in Russia was the idea of an illustrated newspaper reluctantly accepted, but this was because of the personal opposition of ambassador Buchanan.¹ For Masterman Russia was a prime example of the kind of country where pictorial propaganda might flourish.

Where magazines of photographs could not be supplied, individual photographs could. The effect that actual war scenes could add to the printed word was unlimited. It was

1. Memorandum by Masterman, 12 May 1916, F.O. 371/2825, P.R.O., reveals a number of differences that existed between Masterman and Buchanan over the issue of propaganda in Russia.

a prevailing assumption of the time that the camera could not lie and from the very beginning Wellington House was faced with an insatiable demand. The value of such propaganda was learnt from the Germans and the method was fully exploited. By September 1916 Wellington House was sending out 4,000 pictures a week. A special pictorial propaganda department was established at Wellington House in May 1916 under the direction of Ivor Nicholson. Pictures used in the illustrated newspapers were freely distributed in Europe, and agents of distribution were selected, usually from Foreign Office representatives abroad. Large scale distribution was essential, as had been demonstrated by the Maison de la Presse. Most important, however, was the selection of the right kinds of photographs, as indiscriminate distribution would have been harmful. The needs of the native press were a paramount consideration. In countries which were in receipt of daily news concerning the war, it was vital that the photographs should be up-to-date. In July 1916, in imitation of the French, an official photographer with the British army was appointed. That this had not occurred earlier was explained not by lack of pressure from Wellington House and the Foreign Office, but by opposition from the War Office which was very slow to grant the necessary facilities.

The pictorial propaganda department did not confine its activities simply to the issue of photographs. It was involved with various aspects of pictorial reproduction including lantern slides, postcards and cigarette cards, posters and maps. At Easter 1916, 100,000 postcards were sent to Russia with greetings messages. Cigarette cards were intended for distribution in Japan and China through cooperation with the Ardath company. Lantern slides were supplied to lecturers who had the official blessing of the Foreign Office to conduct propaganda tours abroad. But in exploiting these 'new' methods Wellington House soon found itself in difficulty. In September 1916 the Press Bureau warned Wellington House to stop the 'cigarette stiffener stunt'¹ as there was the question of a potential business deal to sell the 'rights'. F.H. Mitchell wrote, 'No arrangements to deal with Official

1. Mitchell to Masterman, 21 Sept. 1916, F.O. 395/36, P.R.O.

Photographs for commercial purposes can be made without the consent of the Press Bureau, and we have already sold certain exclusive rights regarding the Official pictures taken on the Western Front for large sums, and we intend at the proper time to dispose of such rights as remain.¹ Thus when an exhibition of official photographs was held in Paris, Wellington House had to obtain the permission of the Daily Mail to exhibit their photographs. Sir Edward Cook, head of the Press Bureau, blamed the confusion on the various government departments being at cross purposes. The press bureau had established photographic work through demand from the press and through its censorship functions, while the War Office had exclusive authority to dispose of the rights with regard to photo's taken on the Western Front. The result was that Wellington House had to pay the Daily Mail for use of the photographs which sum included a royalty payable to the Press Bureau. Masterman hoped that the Bureau would waive its rights in this respect. In order to get the permission of the Daily Mail, Wellington House had to promise that all photographs supplied to it would be distributed gratuitously for propaganda purposes and not sold, and that no use of the photo's was to be made in the United Kingdom. With regard to cigarette stiffeners, which monopoly the Mail also held, Wellington House was at first asked to restrict supply to the Dutch East Indies and China. But Wellington House would not agree and eventually the Daily Mail limited itself to exclusive rights in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. More problems arose concerning the distribution of photographs in the United States where Wellington House wished to employ, amongst others, the International Film Service, which was part of the Hearst Press. This the Foreign Office objected to, as it did not wish to be answerable to Parliament. The pro-German attitude of the Hearst Press had aroused considerable criticism in Britain and the use of the I.F.S. would have been seen as comforting the enemy. Wellington House fought against this attitude, but eventually Grey ordered Masterman to sever the connexion with the Hearst press.² Masterman was concerned lest circulation should suffer and this led

1. Mitchell to Masterman, 21 Sept. 1916, F.O. 395/36, P.R.O.
 2. Grey to Masterman, 22 Nov. 1916, F.O. 395/36, P.R.O.

eventually in 1917 to the creation of the British Pictorial Service under Geoffrey Butler, who claimed in June 1917 that he had multiplied the placing of our photographs in papers all over America by 125%¹ though this was to be only a part of his overall responsibility.

Pictorial propaganda was not confined to the product of man and camera. In May 1916, following a conversation with Muirhead Bone, who drew attention to the fact that he was going to be called up, A.S. Watt, literary adviser to Wellington House, proposed that Bone's services should be taken up by the propaganda department and both Gowers and Masterman were very quick to see the possibilities, though Gowers doubted how useful the work Bone might do would be as propaganda.² But other departments were equally interested and the War Office agreed to his exemption from military service, while Charteris at G.H.Q. welcomed the idea of his coming to the front. Bone was provided with a car and given freedom to sketch what he wished. In December Masterman did propose that Bone sketched a leading military figures, as the personal element in propaganda was usually a successful one. Bone was not confident of his portraiture and Francis Dodd was proposed as an alternative. The use of war artists increased during the war and exhibitions of their work were held at home and abroad, especially in America. Their link with propaganda is tenuous in that the artists at the insistence of Masterman were allowed to act independently, to produce their own work and their own views. Masterman's belief was that they would convey accurate information about the war through the eye of the artist and this is what he sought, accurate transmission of information. The works of Bone, Dodd, Sir William Orpen, and especially Paul Nash and C.R.W. Nevinson, are a permanent testament to that belief. The artists exhibited their work privately, in addition to the general exhibitions arranged by Masterman. Altogether, considerable interest in the war was promoted by these paintings and this justified their work as far as the propaganda organisations were concerned. No attempt was ever made to dictate either the subject matter or

1. Butler to Buchan, 27 June 1917, F.O. 395/76, P.R.O.

2. Gowers to Montgomery, 25 May 1916, F.O. 395/47, P.R.O.

the content of their work so that one particular vision of the war was presented. Wellington House respected artistic freedom as it respected freedom of the press and it was felt that this was the best sort of propaganda that any democracy could offer. This spirit continued until the end of the war. Lord Beaverbrook had already employed artists in his capacity as Canadian War Records Officer for the Canadian War Memorial, a collection of paintings which recorded the wartime activities and achievements of the Canadian troops. He sought to initiate a similar collection in his capacity as Minister of Information though he found it difficult to obtain money. However, by the end of the war, the number of war artists had risen to 90, and the new ones included Wyndham Lewis, John Sargent and Stanley Spencer.

Pictorial propaganda in all its forms was a success. The most successful and effective form of pictorial propaganda was the cinema. The idea that the camera could not lie was held to be still more true of the moving picture. The attraction of the cinema, moreover, lay in the sheer novelty of its impact. Although moving pictures had been introduced before the beginning of the century, cinema-going had not become a habit common to the large majority. War-time conditions provided the cinema with an excellent opportunity to expand its audience, as licensing hours were reduced, consumption of luxury goods discouraged and as the purchasing power of the working class eventually rose. The significance of this was not lost upon the propagandists. The 2nd Wellington House Report recognised the cinema as being the 'Bible' of the working classes of most countries, who would be little affected by books and pamphlets.¹ The report also recognised that the Germans had been quicker to exploit this new medium. Sir George Barclay, British ambassador at Bucharest, confirmed this in January 1915. The Germans were sending films to Rumania as propaganda, one of which demonstrated the use of dum-dum bullets in British service rifles. As Barclay pointed out in September of the same year, 'it is essential to use the cinematograph for propaganda and especially in countries like Rumania, where the number of people who can read and write

1. INF. 4/5, P.R.O. p.6.

is very small.¹ Wellington House were not at fault in allowing the Germans to get ahead. According to Gowers, Wellington House had proposed the use of the cinema soon after war broke out but both the Admiralty and the War Office had refused to provide the necessary facilities.² This is confirmed by J. Brookes-Wilkinson of the Topical Film Company Ltd. who at a general meeting of film makers in March 1915, held to discuss the FA cup, raised the question of war films and found that up to that time, 'the British War Office had flatly refused to grant permission for them to be taken on the Western Front.'³ During the very early days of the war, the trade had been encouraged to take films with the Belgian army, but when it was driven back all permits were cancelled. The French and Germans, however, both allowed filming at the front to continue. Wilkinson and others took up the issue, and after various interviews with the Foreign Office and other departments, a conference was arranged in May 1915 at which the Army Council expressed its willingness to cooperate. An outline scheme was submitted to Sir Reginald Brade at the War Office and in July the scheme was submitted to the trade. The proposals were that two operators be nominated to work under such supervision as the Army Council might determine. The films would be divided into two categories, those for immediate exhibition and those for historical record. The scheme was accepted by the Topical Committee⁴ of the Manufacturer's Association. Additional proposals from Charles Urban of the Kinetograph Company Limited, to use a two colour process in the making of films, were rejected by the War Office who claimed that there was no evidence that there was any appeal to the public, though the process was used in hundreds of cinemas. By October 1915 agreement was complete. The trade provided the equipment while the War Office paid for transport and living expenses. All negatives, prints and copyrights were vested in the Secretary of State. The trade was permitted only to issue films for exhibition in the Empire

-
1. Barclay to the Foreign Office, 10 Sept. 1915, F.O. 371/2577 P.R.O.
 2. Report to Foreign Office, 29 May 1916, F.O. 395/37, P.R.O.
 3. J. Brookes-Wilkinson, Film and Censorship in England, Chap.XI 'The War Years', undated copy of this chapter only in INF. 4/2 P.R.O.
 4. Formed following the conference in May 1915.

(except India and Egypt). The selling price of the film was 4½d per foot of which the War Office received 1d. This meant that at least one half of the profits went to the charities selected by the War Office. The War Office also retained the right to purchase films required for foreign markets. Two operators were sent to the front, E.C. Tong of Imperial Pictures Limited, and H.A. Malins of Gaumont. The film was sent back for developing, printing and editing before it was sent to G.H.Q. The films were issued in series, one subject being dealt with per week. The amount of film taken varied from 330 to 704 feet. In July 1916, at the instigation of Sir Max Aitken, the Canadian Government made a similar agreement. In both cases the success of the war films was such that the War Office decided to run the whole business themselves. In October 1916 the War Office Cinematograph Committee was created under the chairmanship of Lord Beaverbrook, as a single authority to take over arrangements existing with the British and Canadian governments. In the following month all contracts were cancelled and by April 1917 the British Topical Committee for War Films came to an end having paid over £12,000 in royalties to the War Office. In May 1917 the War Office undertook complete control of the production and distribution of films taken at the front, purchasing shares in the Topical Film Company Ltd. The Committee consisted of Beaverbrook, Sir Reginald Brade, Sir William Jury (of Imperial Pictures Limited) and Sir Graham Greene from the Admiralty. This committee continued to function until June 1918 when it was absorbed within the Ministry of Information.

The change in attitude of the War Office in 1915 had also enabled Wellington House to go ahead with its own plans for propaganda films and Masterman formed his own Cinema Committee in August 1915, consisting of Brookes-Wilkinson, T.A. Welsh of Gaumont, W.F. Jury of Imperial Pictures and Charles Urban of Kinet. As with the other Wellington House bodies, all proceedings were in secret. This committee set about producing and distributing films suitable for allied and neutral countries, the War Office having transferred the film rights in these countries to the Cinema Committee. Brookes-Wilkinson commented 'the work accomplished, if it could be described in detail, would constitute an epic

unparalleled in the history of the industry.¹ The first project undertaken by the Committee involved films of the army, navy and Vickers munitions. By November 1915 all such films had been viewed and the committee was able to construct 15,000 feet of film into 'Britain Prepared' which opened on 29 December 1915 at the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square. A specially invited audience saw the film with music written for the occasion and heard an address by Balfour, as First Lord of the Admiralty. The whole affair was a great success and following this domestic premiere, the film was distributed all over the world. For a long time it was the only Wellington House film, but its message was a permanent one. It attempted to show Britain's strength, her preparedness to see the war through and the considerable efforts being put into the war by the British people as a whole.

The first cinema campaign took place in Russia where suspicions that we were allowing France and Russia to bear the brunt of the war effort had gained widespread currency. 'Britain Prepared' and other films with related themes were an obvious means of countering such a view. It was hoped that the Gaumont Company would arrange for the distribution of the films through the various branches in Russia. The films were to have Russian subtitles and it was hoped a lecturer would accompany the films to give a short introductory address and perhaps answer questions. Wellington House chose as its representative in Russia Captain Bromhead, who was serving under the War Office and who had been in peacetime one of Gaumont's managers. His association with the government was kept secret. He was sent out in January 1916 to examine conditions and to prepare the way for exhibition. In order to obtain maximum publicity, Bromhead arranged for an official showing to the Czar, his heads of staff and then the Petrograd press. The 'premiere' took place on 5 April 1916 at the Marynsky Theatre in the capital. It was a great success, as were all the previews. The Czar also attended the show given to the Russian G.H.Q. Following this success, Bromhead was able to arrange showings before the Russian army, the prime target as far as convincing the Russians of British efforts.

1. Film and Censorship in England, Chap. XI 'the War Years' Inf. 4/2, P.R.O.

Since the film shows were to take place at the front, this meant a mobile cinema. Bromhead had fixed up a group of lorries, one to mount the screen and the others to mount the generators and the projector. By 9 May he was showing the films to General Brusilov's armies on the southern front and by 17 May his mobile cinema had travelled the length of the front with Austria, giving 44 shows to 100,000 men and 3,000 officers. The films were frequently shown within firing distance of the Austrian lines though nothing untoward happened until on one occasion the national anthem was sung at the end and the Russian troops began cheering, at which the Austrians immediately opened fire.¹ By July Bromhead was in Finland and in August he showed the films on the northern front. As a reward for his work, the Czar decorated him with the Order of St. Stanislas, 3rd class.

The resounding success of the Russian venture was an encouragement to efforts elsewhere. Charles Urban was sent to America to arrange, with the help of Captain Guy Gaunt, the naval attaché, for the distribution of films in America, while T.A. Welsh was sent to act as the agent in France. In September 1916 Captain Frankau² was sent to arrange the exhibition of films in Italy. Their main task was to arrange suitable contracts for showing the films. They were not to reveal their relations with the government and so there was no question of free distribution. This could create problems as in Russia where the Foreign Office argued for free distribution when Wellington House had a contract to fulfil. Many criticisms were made of the high prices of British films in Holland as compared with the freely distributed German ones. But Wellington House felt that the high prices charged were an incentive for the buyer to recoup his money through wide publicity, though this tended to result in the films remaining in the big cities and not reaching the provinces. But these particular problems did not prevent the various agents laying the foundation for the vast expansion of film propaganda that

-
1. Bromhead's report to Cinema Committee, June 1916, F.O. 395/25 (see also F.O. 371/2825), P.R.O. - the Russian bands went to special trouble to learn the national anthem though they were frequently undecided as to whether to play God Save the King or Rule Britannia; they usually ended by playing both.
 2. Gilbert Frankau, 1884-1952, the novelist.

was to take place in 1917. Demands for cinema propaganda poured in from Foreign Office representatives throughout 1916. Beak, the consul at Basle, pointed out that the cinemas had largely replaced theatre programmes and that in Switzerland German films were predominant, with French and Italian ones a bad second, while Britain was nowhere in a medium which Beak considered to be the most important of all.¹ The British consul at Rio commented 'The cinematograph is the most popular form of entertainment in this city. The establishments devoted to it are probably larger and more elaborate than in any other part of the world and its value as a means of propaganda cannot be over estimated.'² From Scandinavia to Japan the demand was for propaganda films.

The significance of the cinema was recognised in the reorganisation that took place at the creation of the Department of Information in February 1917. A special section was set up to deal with all questions relating to cinematographic propaganda, absorbing the Cinema Committee begun by Masterman. The new organising body immediately produced a memorandum which was to set the framework for future development.³ The Foreign Office was to act as coordinator and all communication was to be directed through it. The major themes of the films themselves was established: the magnitude of British effort; the means adopted to alleviate suffering of war; the various aspects of British life; and the commercial prospects of the British Empire when peace was restored. Where possible, films of special interest to particular countries were to be made, for instance the film of the Portugese contingent with the British army. But the most serious task facing the new organisation was that of obtaining efficient distribution. Where the cinema was well established in a country the existing machinery could be used, otherwise travelling plant would be necessary. Three methods of distribution were possible: by contract made in London either for the concessionnaire to purchase the entire renting rights to handle the films on a percentage basis; by special agents of the Cinematograph

1. Beak to Foreign Office, 9 Mar. 1916, F.O. 371/2831, P.R.O.
 2. 19 Feb. 1916, F.O. 371/2831, P.R.O.
 3. 12 Apr. 1917, F.O. 395/66, P.R.O.

section sent out to the most important countries to make similar arrangements with a concessionnaire, or to carry out the work themselves, or create committees to do this, or to supervise others; by government officials acting as agents. Of the three methods, it was clear that the second was the most desirable, since it meant that the Cinematograph section of the Department of Information could maintain constant supervision of the work being done through direct contacts. Thus it was the method usually employed. Wherever possible a profit was to be made and advertising was essential. It was stipulated that the films were never to be sold outright. The maximum period of renting was to be twelve months. The concessionnaire was to pay an agreed sum per foot or to pay a fixed proportion of the gross takings, say 60% to 40% for the government. It was up to the agents to decide on what was needed for their particular country or area. It was also decided to produce films of shorter length to be shown at more regular intervals.

The ideas in the memorandum were soon put into practice. In Japan, the ambassador at Tokyo, Sir Coningham Greene, promoted films, beginning with a grand showing in Tokyo to which he invited the Imperial family, ambassadors, ministers, bishops. This followed a private showing to the Emperor who greatly approved of the films. They had had great impact on their distinguished audience. They were very impressed to see the King walking amongst his troops and by the pictures of the fleet. They groaned at the 4.7 cm. guns and as one Japanese reporter described it, the 15 inch guns made the 'blood boil and the flesh dance.'¹ The audience was seen to take cover every time a shell was fired! Films were well established as a medium of propaganda by the time the agent of the Department of Information, Frederick Coleman, arrived in September to arrange for a cinema contract in Japan. He appointed an official contractor for the films, Robert Eyre, and also appointed a Tokyo committee to supervise Eyre's work, a committee which was to include the commercial attache, the President of the Patriotic League of Britons Overseas, the head of the Hong-Kong Shanghai Bank and the treasurer of the

1. Greene to Foreign Office, 2 Jan. 1917, F.O. 395/92, P.R.O.

Patriotic League Fund. In China there was considerable trouble with the empresario, Maurice Bandman, employed by Eyre. The counsellor of the embassy in Peking, B.W. Alston, complained about the haggling over the films, 'it is regrettable that the British film propaganda in China should be subordinated to personal gain. Can Eyre be instructed forthwith to exhibit in north China regardless of profit or loss?'¹ Alston wanted another propaganda committee which had been established in Shanghai, similar in its composition to the one in Tokyo, to take over Bandman's responsibilities for in April 1917 when the film, 'The Battle of the Somme' was shown, Bandman doubled all the prices, a measure which the Shanghai committee considered very dubious if it was meant to advance propaganda. Lampson, of the Foreign Office, confirmed Alston's findings, 'Shanghai were perfectly furious with Bandman: they took an entire booking of the film to impress selected Chinese, imagining that the dubs they put up were going to a war charity: afterwards they tumbled to it that the bulk of the proceeds were appropriated by Bandman: so the sickness is great and they swear "Never again!"'² Lampson considered Eyre to be thick with Bandman and that they both might have to go, though Coleman had much faith in Eyre. But what was significant here was the conflict of principle between propaganda and commercial profit. Lampson felt 'it would almost be better to cut the cinema out of China altogether and avoid such ground for criticism unless the thing is to be done properly.'³ He argued that it was not much of an argument for British efficiency which we talked about so much in our pamphlets.⁴ In May 1917 therefore, the Shanghai committee was given control of all future films for exhibition in China, and although Coleman stood by Eyre in Japan in September, Eyre was closely checked by the Tokyo committee, a reflection of these earlier problems in China. The pattern of responsibility for distribution was far from uniform. In France the new propaganda bureau had responsibility for films but the War Office Cinema Committee continued its work independently and arranged an exchange

-
1. telegram to Foreign Office, 2 Feb. 1917, F.O. 395/92, P.R.O.
 2. consular report to Foreign Office, 26 Feb. 1917, F.O. 395/92, P.R.O.
 3. consular report to Foreign Office, 15 Apr. 1917, F.O. 395/92, P.R.O.
 4. *ibid*

system with the French of films which related to the most recent events of the war, usually amounting to 600 feet per week. In Italy Captain Frankau was the agent in charge of contracts but they were considered unsatisfactory and a further agent was sent out to check on the contractual arrangements. The concessionnaire in Holland was heavily criticised by Foreign Office representatives. The second method of distribution which was favoured had many drawbacks. In Russia a cinema bureau was preferred, being set up in August 1917. Captain Bronhead was to work with the bureau but he was not to be under the direction of the Anglo-Russian Committee established by Buchanan and which now had overall direction of propaganda in Russia. The cinema bureau was to be the central point from where all films and lecturers were to be sent out. Though in practice all the above methods had troubles, at least they were able to give public exhibitions of the films. In Spain this was not permitted. The King of Spain was shown the films but still permission could not be obtained. Only private shows were possible. Therefore the Teatro Benavente in Madrid was hired for special private showings, which was better than nothing at all. But if the King of Spain was not over impressed, the King of Siam certainly was. He was so impressed by the films, particularly those of the tanks that he asked to purchase them so that he might have them as a form of instruction to his own army officers. In April 1917, the Foreign Office made a gift of the films 'Britain Prepared', and 'The Battle of the Somme'.

Though the distribution of the films often provoked adverse criticism, the effect of cinematographic propaganda was undeniable. A great variety of films was sent out. Many had great impact, such as the films of the earliest tanks and they were particularly well received in the home of the film industry, the U.S.A., one of whose greatest directors, D.W. Griffith, was commissioned in October 1917 by the War Office Cinematograph Committee to make the film 'Hearts of the World' which received its first showing in June 1918 in London. The U.S.A. exhibited any film in a blaze of publicity. The cinematograph branch of the Department of Information distributed a memorandum which described for the benefit of their agents the methods of publicity used in Omaha.¹ After

1. memorandum, 4 Oct. 1917, F.O. 395/78, P.R.O.

an initial press campaign and poster work, a mass parade was held with the full treatment, bands galore, police, Red Cross, machine gun companies. When the film, 'The Tanks at Ancre' was showing, each night was detailed for a specific society. On Tuesday it was the W.O.W., Wednesday the Masons, Thursday the Knights of Columbus. There is no evidence that such methods were employed in other countries, however. The agents were considered to know best the methods that need be employed in their own countries. But whatever the country and whatever the method employed, no other medium of propaganda was able to achieve the same immediate and successful impact that was obtainable through showing moving pictures. They personalised war on a scale that hitherto had never been reached and they played an integral part in making the war one of total involvement for those who were committed to it.

The methods of propaganda that have been outlined above were the most significant that were employed but there were many other means of seeking to spread influence abroad or simply to create friendly relations. Most of them were tried in America, itself the home of advertising and novel publicity techniques. The lecture was used only sparingly. Wellington House and the Foreign Office usually opposed lecture tours which they had not organised themselves. They wished to avoid the brash appeal that a lecture tour usually implied. In America, Wellington House stated, 'much of the work had consisted in undoing the harm which has been done by those who have rushed impulsively to lecture the United States on her duty in the war.'¹ Those who were sent to lecture were chosen as experts on particular topics about which questions needed to be answered such as Lancelot Smith on commercial and maritime questions relating to the blockade, George Trevelyan relating to the Serbian and Balkan situation. Gilbert Murray was a favourite choice as a lecturer though when he toured Scandinavia in April 1916 he was refused permission to lecture on his proposed topic, 'Great Britain and the War.' He therefore chose academic topics but used every opportunity to convey information about the war through question time.² The logic of the Foreign Office was clear.

1. 1st report Wellington House, p.3.

2. report to the Foreign Office, 17 Apr. 1916, F.O. 371/2827, P.R.O.

They wished to avoid anything which seemed to be directly on the war and which then might be suspect as being government inspired. All official lecturers were never to reveal their official connexions and usually went under the sponsorship of voluntary societies independent of the government and therefore any official connexion. This cautious attitude towards lectures and lecturers was no doubt a wise policy for judging by the frequent requests received by the Foreign Office from those wishing to lecture in the United States, America was saved from a veritable bombardment. Less discreet however was the proposal to hold Allied bazaars in America which was suggested in July 1916. Exhibitions would be held in all the major cities in America with the exhibits relating mainly to the war, but the opportunity being taken at the same time to advance the sale of British goods. In one bazaar in 1917 a reproduction was set up of the Cheshire Cheese, a noted London restaurant. In connexion with such bazaars a British tank was sent out and in October 1917 a captured U-boat which did its best to escape by trying to submerge in a New York street. One of the trucks carrying the U-boat fell through the road when it subsided because of burst water mains! Sometimes English entertainers were encouraged to perform in America, such as Harry Lauder in October 1917, his visit being a great success. These more overt methods of propaganda were much more apparent in 1917 and were a reflection of America's change of status from a neutral to an allied country. Though discretion was still necessary in approaching the American press, the clearest sign of the new relationship was the Balfour mission of April 1917. Grey had never visited America or indeed any country on such a mission. But Balfour did with much success and he left behind him his director of publicity on the mission, Geoffrey Butler, to form a permanent bureau, to improve on the propaganda service that had existed until then. America never lost its position of being the major propaganda target. Methods employed in various countries were always given special organisational treatment in America. This was true of the Raemakers cartoons. Raemakers was Dutch and a powerful critic of the Germans in his cartoons which appeared regularly in the National Tidende one of the leading Dutch newspapers. In May 1916 Buchan proposed the use of his cartoons in America as well as

elsewhere in Europe, as a means of propaganda. Various ways of publicising the cartoons was suggested: exhibitions of originals, exhibitions of facsimiles, the presentation of sets to galleries and journalists, etc., selling them in book form with a special de luxe edition, serial publication, through a cinema film of his drawings, postcards and finally the syndicalising of new cartoons. Exhibitions had already taken place in England and France and J. Murray Allison was given the task of extending the idea to the U.S.A. Allison prepared the ground in July 1916, making contracts with Doubleday and Page, the Stern Advertising Co. and Curtis Publishing Co., to launch the cartoons. When he returned in October of the same year, nothing had developed. Most people recoiled from using the cartoons and no one wished to authorise an exhibition of such obvious propaganda material. German pressure groups were particularly strong in influencing the press mainly through the threat of the withdrawal of advertising revenues. But Allison persevered, placing his faith in Raemakers' own genius. His series of cartoons on Belgium helped persuade many to view his cartoons after a disastrous opening in Chicago where three people out of an invited two thousand turned up to view the exhibition. Allison relied mainly upon the press, especially the Boston Transcript, The Philadelphia Ledger and the Chicago Tribune which were all members of the Public Ledger Syndicate. These papers and others guaranteed to print three or four cartoons per week. Though many exhibitions were refused, Allison was steadily able to extend them through the country, beginning in New York, Boston and then Chicago and steadily working his way through all the main cities. The problems were many, not least being the supply of cartoons and keeping them topical, for they tended to arrive one month after the event when the news was cold. But in June 1917 the campaign was advanced by the personal visit of Raemakers to the United States. By this time twenty-six major newspapers took the cartoon service while fifteen had dropped out because of criticism from readers and backers. Allison got himself into trouble with the Foreign Office as well, for making a contract with International Feature Service, an offshoot of the Hearst agency while Raemakers provoked much reaction in October 1917 with a series of anti-catholic cartoons, for he was very critical of the Pope's attitude to the war.

Nevertheless by October 1917, over two thousand cartoons had been displayed in over two thousand newspapers, amounting to a circulation of just under 250 million,¹ which helped support Allison's claim that 'Reemakers' cartoons have received greater prominence than any other six cartoonists in this country and far greater publicity than in all the European papers put together.'²

America was also the major target of one of the most famous of the British propaganda efforts of the First World War, the production of the Lusitania medal. It had come to the notice of the Foreign Office, through an extract reprinted in the Daily Review of the Foreign Press for 12 April 1916, that the Nieuwe Amsterdammer of 8 April had published an illustration of a bronze medal struck to record the sinking of the Lusitania. The obverse of the medal said, 'No contraband (Keine Banware)' and showed the ship laden with guns and flying machines but no passengers and on the reverse, 'Business above everything (Geschäft uber alles)' with a skeleton sitting in the Cunard Office giving tickets to non-combatants who refused to pay attention to German warnings concerning submarines. The picture came from a medal catalogue, obtained for the Foreign Office by Maxse in Holland. He also managed to send a specimen medal and proofs which were ordered from Germany. The medal excited much attention and was sent to America to be published in the New York Tribune of 7 May 1916. So much interest was aroused that Wellington House prepared an illustrated document on the medal. The idea of a replica came probably from several sources, Masterman himself and Lord Bryce, though after the making of the first 50,000 both Gowers and Masterman thought that the expense was not worth it since they cost £1,000 but the Foreign Office was determined to see it through. At the end of July, W.G. Selfridge took over the production of the replicas, wanting no profits. He suggested sale at 1/-, 3½d to the retailer, 1½d to Selfridge and then to the Red Cross. He reckoned production would rise to 10,000 per week. On September 11 a special committee was set up in Duke Street to deal solely with the distribution of the

1. Allison's report to the Foreign Office, Oct. 1917, F.O. 395/66 P.R.O.

2. report to Foreign Office, Feb. 1917, F.O. 395/66, P.R.O.

replicas and the members of this committee received a constant demand from all over the world.¹

The propagandists were flexible in their methods and always willing to try out special ideas. Thus ashtrays in the form of tanks were sent to the U.S.A., gramophone records with speeches by Lloyd George were a popular idea in 1918 and recordings of such songs as 'Keep the Home Fires Burning' were sent to Denmark, following the request of the military attache who was running propaganda.² Trips by British theatrical companies were encouraged though one such venture fell through. Mr. J.T. Grain had planned a theatre trip to Holland for the benefit of prisoners and was encouraged by the Department of Information to widen the scope of his visit but without identifying himself with the Department. However he announced that his trip had been officially sponsored by the government and thus the scheme was destroyed, for the Department had to deny all knowledge of the arrangement. Another opportunity for propaganda emerged in the Balkans, where the spread of British influence in Greece was fostered through the Boy Scout movement. British influence was also spread by more indirect means, with the Foreign Office encouraging any body or scheme which might promote better understanding between Britain and allied and neutral countries. One of the most natural and popular methods was educational exchange. The initiative came usually from interested academics who wished to increase the flow of information from and to particular countries in order to promote better cultural and historical understanding. Thus Professor Bernard Pares sought to promote better academic communications with Russia. He organised a conference at Cambridge in August 1916 to help promote Slavonic studies. As the only professor of Russian in the country, he felt isolated. Other Universities responded. London established the School of Slavonic Studies with Professor R.W. Seton-Watson and Thomas Masaryk as its leading academics. Sheffield and Manchester Universities also established similar schools. America was an obvious target for

-
1. file on Lusitania medal, F.O. 395/42, P.R.O. - a specimen of the Lusitania medal is kept in the safe of the P.R.O. and is available for inspection.
 2. Lieutenant Colonel Wade to Foreign Office, 15 Aug. 1917, F.O. 395/113, P.R.O.

educational exchanges, and the Foreign Office encouraged enquiries into the possibilities of opening up English universities to American students and there was a very favourable reaction from the universities, which included considering the extension of Rhodes scholarships to students of allied countries. In 1918 London created a professorship of Italian. The Foreign Office also gave encouragement to societies created to promote understanding between countries, modelled on the Anglo-Russian Society which was formed by ambassador Buchanan in June 1916. An Anglo-Spanish society was set up in September of the same year. There were also in existence an Anglo-Hellenic and Anglo-Italian League. In March 1917 an Anglo-Italian institute was proposed for Florence where a library would be created and facilities for studying the English language and English literature. Attempts were made in 1918 to set up an Anglo-Portuguese society which might also involve Brazil. There were of course numerous societies already linking Britain with the United States.

The methods employed by propaganda organisations during the war were then varied and this was part of a deliberate policy which laid down that those with local knowledge ought to be the ones to advise on the form and most relevant methods of propaganda. As the scope of work increased during the war, not only was there centralisation in terms of the organisational headquarters in England but also in terms of the propaganda efforts in allied and neutral countries. With the creation of the Department of Information in 1917, various agents were sent out to head propaganda bureaux abroad in order to draw together all the various work that was being done in propaganda in their respective countries. In Japan the Tokyo propaganda committee was set up in January 1917. In China, the Shanghai committee had already been established the year before. In France the new propaganda bureau was established in October 1917 under E.R. McLagan, while in Italy Thorold had established one in July 1917. Both the latter had problems. In France powerful organisational links already existed with the Maison de la Presse and the new bureau created some anomalies. In Italy, centralisation was resented by those who had previously a free hand where propaganda was concerned from the beginning of the war. Such was Donna Bettina de Cassanova, who had run

propaganda in Northern Italy and Rennell Rodd found himself in the role of peacemaker which involved making Thorold answerable to Rodd and thus some confusion of authority. In Russia, it was Buchanan himself who initiated in January 1917 the Anglo-Russian Commission which centralised propaganda control. In South America the system of local propaganda committees was maintained. In Switzerland and Scandinavia press bureaux were set up while in the United States, it was Geoffrey Butler who was placed in charge of the new bureau, which though simply entitled the British Pictorial Service, had much greater scope of action. The improvements such changes brought were soon apparent. Greater efficiency was achieved and there was less chance of duplication. But the new organisations did not involve new methods since most of these were conceived before reorganisation. Nor did it involve great changes of personnel, for the new bureaux were generally built around and upon those who were already running propaganda. Thus continuity was maintained as the problems remained the same. Each country had its indigenous problems which could only be dealt with on a local basis. This was true of certain areas within countries, such as in the United States where the Middle West needed altogether different handling than that given to other areas. The new bureaux were not meant to alter this. They were nationally based and were to work independently except where cooperation was necessary. The heads of the new organisations were not given detailed instructions as to what they should do. Their task was to make the existing system more efficient in their respective areas of responsibility.

These same arguments apply to the creation of the Ministry of Information in 1918. The changes that took place in organisation were accompanied by changes in methods, but these alterations were not ones of kind, but ones of emphasis. None of the methods employed by the Ministry was in any sense original. The novelty lay in the emphasis given to certain methods of propaganda at the expense of others. Propaganda by pamphlet was greatly reduced. The centre of gravity was shifted away from Masterman's literary department. In the first three months of the ministry's existence only twelve pamphlets were published, something like 10% of the normal production. The explanation of this shift was various. A major

cause, which predated the creation of the ministry, was the shortage of paper. In January 1918 a paper conference was held at which alarm was expressed at paper wastage. The Newspaper Proprietors were particularly prominent in this, as they were greatly envious of the amount of paper available to the propaganda organisations while they suffered under severe limitations with regard to their own news space. Masterman was asked to reduce his use of paper both for pamphlets and for such publications as War Pictorial and America Latina. Masterman resisted on the grounds that the Department of Information used 6,000 tons out of an estimated 460,000 tons, 315,000 tons of which went to the general trade. 6,000 tons represented 1 1/2% of the total supply and 4.1% of government requirements, which amounted to 145,000 tons. Masterman also pointed out that the paper used by the department was esparto, which was imported under a special licence, and which was not used by daily newspapers as it was too expensive.¹ But other arguments told against Masterman. The whole value of propaganda by pamphlet was questioned. The criticisms of Robert Donald² were accepted. Distribution was considered to be wasteful and much of the illustrated material sent out was thought to involve too much duplication. Thus in June 1918, America Latina was discontinued as an officially backed publication, and so too were O Espelho and Hesperia. The supply of War Pictorial was much reduced. According to a confidential report on Wellington House³ in July 1918, this enabled a saving of 4,000 tons in use of paper. The report also condemned the distribution of photographs. Distribution was on a weekly basis and in the first four months of 1918, according to the report, an average of 27 1/2 prints were sent out per week, often to people living in the most remote of areas, in Canada for instance.⁴ The policy of the Ministry of Information was to produce pamphlets or photos only upon request from the agents in countries abroad. They also sought to have any propaganda publications published in the country for which they were intended.

1. report of conference, 19 Jan. 1918, F.O. 395/252, P.R.O.

2. in the Donald reports, see above, p.43, ff.

3. by Major-General A.D. McRae, 1 July 1918, F/2/307, Bbk. papers, Bbk. Lib., see above, p.59.

4. McRae report

The Ministry of Information believed that the time had come for a change of mood. The workings in secret which had been a feature of Wellington House were no longer believed to be necessary. Instead of the indirect appeal, the Ministry sought to be direct in every way. To Beaverbrook and those around him, the most direct and effective known forms of publicity were propaganda by films, by wireless and by cable. Above all the emphasis was upon personal propaganda. It was very much a newspaperman's view of propaganda. Where Wellington House had aimed at an intellectual élite, the Ministry of Information sought mass response. But the methods employed by the Ministry to achieve its aim were those that had been carefully tried and tested and exploited by Masterman's subordinates. The change in emphasis brought about by the Ministry would have been impossible to effect smoothly without there having been the experimentation in methods, the flexibility of organisation and the continuity of development that had taken place during the first three years of the war.

Chapter 4 - The Content of Official Propaganda

A comprehensive list of the pamphlets commissioned and distributed by Wellington House¹ enables us to analyse the various themes expounded by British propagandists in allied and neutral countries. The alterations in emphasis may be traced year by year and the style and presentation may be considered from an examination of the various pamphlets themselves. The original list contains 996 titles and there are two additional lists, one with 133 titles and the other 18, making a total of 1147 titles. Of these items, 190 consist of reprinted speeches, documents or illustrative material. This leaves a total of 1007 written pamphlets, of which 57 were reprints later in the war for issue in America. Thus the number of original pamphlets produced by Wellington House during the war amounted to 950.

For the purposes of comparison, three periods of production have been selected to coincide with changes in propaganda organisation, 1914-16 when Wellington House formulated propaganda policy, 1917 when the responsibility lay with the Department of Information, and finally 1918 when the Ministry of Information assumed control.

The general themes and the proportion of pamphlets devoted to them may be expressed in the following rough percentages:-

Pamphlets relating to British affairs, the attitudes of the British public, the efforts being made in the forces and in the factories, British foreign policy	42%
Pamphlets relating to German affairs, German atrocities (excluding Belgium), the Kaiser, German philosophy, war aims, colonial rule, Prussian militarism etc.	20%
Pamphlets directed against the allies of Germany	31%
Pamphlets relating to Belgium	10%
Pamphlets dealing with neutrality or recording the attitudes of neutrals to the war and to the belligerents	3%

1. Schedule of Wellington House Literature, F.O. 395/278, P.R.O.
- also to be found in I.W.M. but without two additional lists.

pamphlets dealing with the allies of the British describing their ideas etc., and their role in the war	3%
Pamphlets relating to the causes of the war	3%
Pamphlets on the economic conditions of both Britain and Germany	1%
Pamphlets relating to the countries of the Empire	2%
Pamphlets relating specifically to American attitudes to the war both as neutral and ally	2%
Pamphlets concerning Irish attitudes and efforts in the war	1%
Miscellaneous pamphlets dealing with such issues as the Middle East, the Jewish question, and others	7%

(with 2½% error).

In terms of the time periods, the distribution pattern revealed the following:-

<u>Theme</u>	<u>1914-16</u>	<u>1917</u>	<u>1918</u>
British affairs etc.	26%	45%	29%
German affairs etc.	44%	27%	29%
Anti-German allies	14%	86%	--
Belgium	46%	37%	17%
Neutrals	80%	20%	--
British allies	40%	38%	22%
Causes of the war	100%	--	--
Economic conditions	70%	30%	--
Empire	45%	35%	20%
American attitudes	19%	10%	71% (incl. 57 reprints)
Irish attitudes etc.	20%	80%	--
Miscellaneous	17%	30%	53%
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total %	40%	38%	22%

1917 was undoubtedly the busiest period of propaganda publication and after March 1918, it was rapidly run down by the Ministry of Information. The large miscellaneous section in 1918 reflects the variety of aims and consideration aroused by the prospect of peace. A number of these pamphlets dealt with the problem of the oppressed nationalities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, others with the Middle East, the Jewish

problem and the League of Nations. The major themes of propaganda, however, may be determined from a closer analysis of pamphlets relating to British attitudes and efforts, and from pamphlets directed against German affairs.

The following table analyses the pamphlets dealing with British attitudes and efforts, describing the variety of themes and the frequency with which they were exploited during the three selected time periods.

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Numbers</u>			<u>Total</u>
	<u>1914-16</u>	<u>1917</u>	<u>1918</u>	
The army	5	19	11	35
The navy	9	9	4	22
Illustrated material on both the above		34	13	37
The war (events at the front etc.)	10	24	11	45
The British war effort	7	14	7	28
The Blockade	13	6		19
Treatment of prisoners	1	3	1	5
British opinions	7	6	3	16
Home effort (Labour, munitions, etc.)	4	16	2	22
Women		3	1	4
Finance		6		6
Ireland	8	4	1	13
Jews			2	2
General	2	22	9	33
Reprints from <u>Reality</u>		27	34	61
The Empire		8	1	9
Censorship	5			5
Peace	3	3	6	12
America		2		2
	<u>85</u>	<u>209</u>	<u>109</u>	<u>403</u>

1917 was the period of greatest output, with an especial emphasis on visual material, very often portraits of leading army and navy officers. 1914-16 saw a particular emphasis upon the British war effort and the Blockade. In the case of the former, it was felt necessary to convince the allies that Britain was fully committed to the war, as it was the French

and Russian armies which were bearing the brunt of the fighting and it was not until 1916, at the Somme, that the British could undertake a major offensive alone. The Blockade was a very sensitive issue where neutral countries were concerned, and great effort was expended in trying to justify British activities on the high seas, such as the searching of neutral ships, and the seizing of those carrying contraband, which were the natural concomitants of a blockade policy. Ireland was another major issue, chiefly in 1916, following the Easter Rising and the execution of Sir Roger Casement. Explanation of these events was chiefly directed towards the Americans with their large Irish immigrant population. With the entry of the Americans into the war in 1917, both the issues of the blockade and Ireland ceased to be so important. The chief neutral country had joined the British side, fighting in the name of democracy, and, what was more significant, adding her financial and ultimately her military weight to that of the Triple Entente. By 1917 the need to convince France and Russia of British efforts was less evident as the British army now bore the brunt of the fighting. Russia was close to defeat and the French army close to mutiny at Verdun. Pamphlets on British efforts in 1917 tended to emphasise the efforts and sacrifices made by the population in industry and under the conditions imposed by the German U-boat campaign. There was also a concern to demonstrate the unity of the Empire, chiefly in an attempt to assuage American doubts about British imperialism. Most of the pamphlets on the British Empire were either about Canada, a reflexion of its proximity to the U.S.A. and their shared interests, or about India, in order to answer a strong German campaign which had sought to emphasise the nationalist movement in India and expose British rule as corrupt. Pamphlets on the army and navy continued on an enlarged scale, again emphasising the imperial effort and attempting through the illustrative material, to personalize the war, familiarising peoples with the leaders of the allied efforts. The large general section in 1917 reflected the expansion of pamphlet production to include a much greater variety of issues. This section includes pamphlets on ethical issues, cartoons by Raemakers, pamphlets by allied journalists and writers about England.

1918 saw the expected reduction in output. The army,

the navy, and the events of the war continued to be important subjects and the number of reprints from Reality increased, a result perhaps of the new journalistic element in the Ministry of Information. British foreign policy and peace plans received a lot of attention. Otherwise most issues were run down or completely excluded. The Blockade, Ireland, British efforts and the Empire, all ceased to be of much importance.

A similar analysis may be made of pamphlets dealing with German affairs:-

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Numbers</u>			<u>Total</u>
	<u>1914-16</u>	<u>1917</u>	<u>1918</u>	
Atrocities	21	13	5	39
The Kaiser	2	--	--	2
German philosophy	8	4	3	15
Prussian militarism	--	4	--	4
Germany and democracy	2	1	--	3
German rule (incl. Empire)	7	10	9	26
German navy and zeppelins	7	2	2	11
Economic	5	2	--	7
German propaganda	4	--	1	5
Religion	2	6	5	13
German opinions	3	2	5	10
German allies	1	10	5	16
German peace proposals	--	1	1	2
German war aims	--	7	4	11
Miscellaneous	6	8	4	18
	<u>68</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>182</u>

The analysis of pamphlets against the Germans reveals the large number devoted to atrocities. In the 1914-16 period a third of the total output was atrocity propaganda. A large number of pamphlets were also devoted to an examination of German philosophy, usually to trace its warlike emphasis which, it was argued, had paved the way for the war. Criticisms of German rule, particularly in Africa, and of the conduct of the German navy in the period 1914-16, might easily have been included in the atrocity section. 1917 saw an apparent reduction of atrocity pamphlets but the increase of pamphlets relating to Germany's allies often concerned Turkish atrocities,

so the proportion of atrocity pamphlets probably remained the same. There were a number of new interests in 1917, including German anti-semitism and anti-catholicism, and Germany's intentions if she won the war. The totals of pamphlets are revealing, however. There is no evidence of an expansion of pamphlet production in 1917. In the case of pamphlets relating to British efforts, production in 1917 was more than doubled. Thus there was a relative decrease in the number of pamphlets specifically directed against the Germans, another reflection perhaps of the entry of America into the war and thus the winning of the battle for neutral opinion. 1918 reveals the expected reduction. The issue of German rule or rather misrule, was still important and a number of pamphlets were devoted to anti-semitism again, but generally the pamphlets were spread evenly over the various issues.

The atrocity pamphlets listed here do not include the many pamphlets dealing with Belgium which have been treated under a separate heading. Virtually the whole of the propaganda relating to Belgium revolved round the issue of German atrocities in Belgium. Since atrocity propaganda loomed so large during the First World War and undoubtedly gripped the public imagination, and was largely responsible for the ill-repute with which propaganda activities were regarded after the war, it is necessary to give the whole subject closer attention.

Atrocity propaganda was nothing new but it was exploited to an unprecedented degree throughout the First World War. 1918 saw as much atrocity propaganda as 1914 though this was not a reflexion of any consistent attitude towards such propaganda on the part of those charged with formulating policy.

The appearance of atrocity propaganda in the period 1914-16 was a natural development from the arguments relating to the causes of the war. Britain, it was argued, had entered the war on a moral basis, namely to protect the neutrality of Belgium against the ruthless Germans, who had

ignored the inviolability of the international frontiers of a declared neutral nation. The Germans did not deny this contravention of international law, but argued that necessity had dictated their course of action. In order to engage the sympathy of neutrals, especially the Americans, propagandists believed it most important to establish that Germany was the aggressor. The Belgian issue was therefore given every attention, an attention which lasted throughout the war. In the period 1914-16 there were forty-six pamphlets published in Belgium, thirty-six in 1917 and even in 1918, a period of drastic reduction, sixteen were published. The issue of the breach of international law was clearly not of such interest and complexity that it could sustain all this publicity. In order that the Belgian issue might be kept to the fore, it was necessary to find and exploit any information which would bring moral condemnation upon the Germans. Atrocity propaganda was the natural reinforcement of the original condemnation of Germany's 'immoral' invasion. A whole series of stories appeared concerning the ruthless and inhuman treatment of the Belgian civilian population by the German army.

The character of the accusations was familiar and appears in all wars. The Germans were accused of various crimes ranging from the massacre of innocent civilians to the raping of children. One typical pamphlet,¹ written by the Belgian minister for foreign affairs, consisted of over a hundred pages with numerous illustrations. The first section dealt with the History of Belgium and its independence and contained various documents which demonstrated that Germany broke her word in violating Belgian neutrality. The chancellor of Germany, Bethmann Hollweg, was quoted as saying, 'The wrong - I speak openly - the wrong we thereby commit we will try to make good as soon as our military aims have been obtained.'² The pamphlet then contained an address by Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines and Primate of Belgium, who was a constant propagandist for Belgium for the whole of the war. Other sections contained pictures of an amputated hand and

1. Henri Davignon, Belgium and Germany - Texts and Documents (London, 1915), I.W.M.

2. speech to Reichstag, 4 Aug. 1914, pamphleteer's translation.

included photostats of x-rays, showing the effects of expanding or dum-dum bullets. There were also pictures of the Aerschot massacres (reckoned to be of one hundred and fifty dead), and of the destruction of various national monuments such as the Library at Louvain, the Church of Saint Rembaut de Malines and the Halles of Ypres. The tone of the pamphlet was both cautious and academic, carefully presenting a mass of factual information without recourse to emotional overstatement. A similar tone appeared in a pamphlet by L.H. Grondys,¹ which mentioned a case of a sixteen year old girl being bayoneted for daring to resist rape, but pointed out that the soldiers were then punished by the military authorities. The pamphlet also pointed out that the Germans were very fearful and over-sensitive and massacres such as occurred at Aerschot were carried out in retaliation for reputed crimes by Belgian civilians. The pamphlet also notes the particular hatred which the German troops bore for Catholic priests.

The general tone of the pamphlets was the result of the insistence upon objectivity by C.F.G. Masterman. When an atrocity said to have been committed on a Belgian baby was proposed as a possible propaganda topic, Masterman was reported as saying, 'Find me the name of the hospital where the baby is and get me a signed statement from the doctor and I'll listen.'² It was this attitude that lay behind one of the most famous propaganda publications of the war, The Report of the Committee on Alleged German Outrages (London, 1915), better known as the Bryce Report. Costing 1d., the report contained a sixty page summary of the evidence and an appendix of three hundred pages of selected evidence. The appendix contained five hundred depositions chosen from twelve hundred, chiefly from Belgian refugees and soldiers, and excerpts from thirty-seven German diaries. The whole tone of the report was both academic and detached, as might have been expected from the highly respected chairman of the committee that had produced it, Lord Bryce, who was a particularly well-liked figure in America, where he had once

1. The Germans in Belgium (London, 1915), 95 pages in book form.
 2. Lucy Masterman, C.F.G. Masterman: A Biography (London, 1939), p. 274.

been ambassador¹ and where it was vital the report be favourably received. Bryce began by recording the initial doubts which the whole investigation had raised with the members of the committee. Few had believed that anything useful would be found, but, Bryce recorded, as the investigation proceeded so scepticism was reduced. The confirmation of what had happened came from a variety of sources that could not have been in communication with each other:

And when this concurrence of testimony, this convergence upon what were substantially the same broad facts, showed itself in hundreds of depositions, the truth of these broad facts stood out beyond question. The force of the evidence is cumulative. 2

Although the Bryce committee sat independently of both the Belgian and French commissions which also investigated German atrocities in Belgium, they nevertheless found themselves in accord with their findings. The report dealt with a variety of issues: the burning of villages in the Liege district, the wholesale shooting of civilians in massacres at Dinant, Aerschot and other places, the destruction wrought at Louvain and the ill-treatment of prisoners taken from Louvain to Cologne. In the context of war-time emotions it was immensely difficult for German counter-propaganda to make any effective reply and if we are to believe a Belgian pamphleteer³ the Germans were victims of their own initiative, since in order to justify their actions in Belgium, they produced various pamphlets describing atrocities committed by the Belgian civilian population, the accusation having most currency being that of German soldiers having had their eyes gouged out.

The task of the British propagandist was made easy by the Germans who made repeated diplomatic errors. Aside from the justice of the case, the execution of Nurse Edith Cavell in 1915 was a grave mistake by the Germans for it unleashed a wave of indignation that reached world-wide proportions.

-
1. Sir James Bryce, 1838-1922, historian, ambassador to the United States, Feb. 1907 - Apr. 1913.
 2. the Bryce Report, introduction.
 3. Jean Massart, Belgians under the German Eagle (London, 1916), p.98.

Wellington House produced a best-seller, at 1d. per copy, The Death of Edith Cavell (London, 1915)¹. Its sixty-four pages contained a very controlled account of the whole affair, from her arrest to the execution. Once again for the benefit of an American audience, particular stress was placed upon the role of the American Legation in trying to save her. The Germans were accused of having deliberately failed to keep the American Legation fully informed. The impact of such a case was such that the propaganda relating to it had lasting value. Thus it was a year later, in 1916, that another pamphlet was published dealing with the execution. Written by an American journalist,² the pamphlet indicated the many irregularities concerning the legal aspects of the case, as well as reiterating the argument concerning the failure to consult the American Legation, which involved humiliating treatment for the American representative, Brand Whitlock. Another execution which received much attention at the time, but is not remembered to the same degree as the Cavell case, was that of Captain Fryatt, a merchant navy captain who tried to ram an attacking U-boat, after the U-boat had surfaced to take his surrender. The Murder of Captain Fryatt (London, 1916)³ was another Wellington House best-seller of 1916.

Belgium's suffering continued to be a subject for propaganda until the very end of the war. In 1917, the major topic was the deportation of Belgian workers. Lord Bryce took the lead in raising this issue in The Last Phase in Belgium (London, 1916), which was written in reply to a letter from the New York Herald Tribune. Bryce not only described the deportations, but also took the opportunity of pointing out the failure of the German government to reply to the Bryce report, interpreting this as an admission of guilt. Other witnesses of the deportations were Jules Destree, the Belgian journalist in The Deportations of Belgian Workmen (London, 1917), and Brand Whitlock in his pamphlet The Deportation (London, 1917), in which he indicated that much of his evidence came from the American Commission for Relief in Belgium, which had been specially set up, partly in response to allied

1. no designated author.

2. James Beck, The Case of Edith Cavell (London, 1916), reprinted from New York Times.

3. no designated author.

propaganda.

Accusations relating to deportations were also made with reference to the French in The Deportation of Women and Girls from Lille (London, 1916), eighty-one pages of pure documentation demonstrating the various breaches of international law committed by the Germans. A translation of the official report of the French Commission on The German Atrocities in France, was produced by Wellington House in 1916, and in 1917 Arnold Toynbee wrote The German Terror in France. Toynbee was something of a specialist in atrocity propaganda. In 1915 he wrote Armenian Atrocities, Murder of a Nation, in 1916 The Destruction of Poland, and in 1917 The Murderous Tyranny of the Turks, the latter being prefaced by Lord Bryce. The Turks had always been a target for atrocity propaganda before the First World War, though not of an official nature.¹ This was not so of Austria, but this country too found itself the subject of atrocity accusations from Thomas Masaryk in Austrian Terrorism in Bohemia (London, 1916). There were few German activities to which atrocity labels were not attached. The treatment of prisoners was raised in various pamphlets, The Horrors of Wittenburg (London, 1916), Spanish Prisoner in a German Camp (London, 1917) by Valentin Torres, and British Civilian Prisoners in German East Africa (London, 1918). German mistreatment of the natives of East Africa was recorded in The Black Slaves of Prussia (London, 1918) by F. Iveston. Even the activities of the U-boats and Zeppelins were classified as atrocities, no doubt because of their novelty, just as in 1870 the artillery bombardment of Paris by the Germans had been condemned as immoral. The Germans replied by stressing that the blockade was a deliberate war on the civilian population. But they could not exploit the situation so easily since they had no wish to acknowledge the effectiveness of the blockade. Hence they could not gain sympathy by describing the effects which tended to be long-term and gradual and thus less dramatic and able to withstand sensational treatment. When the Germans tried to reply to British propaganda on the sinking of the Lusitania by issuing a medal to demonstrate that the Lusitania

1. for example, Gladstone on Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria in 1878.

was carrying munitions and that tickets were sold for passage on the ship in complete disregard of German warnings of U-boat activity on the sea-routes to Britain, they found their idea turned against them. British propagandists, in producing replicas of the original medal, implied that the original had been struck in honour of the sinking, thus ignoring the satirical intention of the medal.¹ The replicas sold all over the world, especially in America, many of whose citizens had been victims of the torpedoing.²

The sinking of the Lusitania and incidents like it were a propagandist's dream. They fitted well with Masterman's concept of propaganda for they were consistent with the facts, though the interpretation of these facts might differ. Generally Masterman demonstrated considerable caution where sensational incidents were concerned. Though initially a supporter of the sale of the replicas of the Lusitania medal, he soon withdrew his backing on the grounds of expense.³ Masterman rejected sensational publicity for its own sake, the kind employed by a scoop-conscious press. In 1916 Britain was suffering much adverse criticism of her policy in Ireland. Following the abortive Easter Rising and the severe punishment of its leaders, there was a great deal of sympathy in the foreign press, mainly in the United States, for the martyrs of the revolution. Sir Roger Casement, in particular, received heroic treatment from the American press. Alarmed by this sympathetic reaction, the Foreign Office sought to redress the balance. In order to undermine Casement's moral reputation, it was proposed that extracts from Casement's diaries, giving details of his homosexual activities, should be published. Both the Cabinet and the Foreign Office were divided over the release of the extracts, but Lord Newton, as head of the Foreign Office News Department, took matters into his own hands:

-
1. this medal was one of a series of such medals issued by the Germans - see Lucy Masterman, p.280.
 2. see above, p.119 ff. - for a reproduction of the medal and details of the Lusitania sinking which confirms it was carrying munitions, a detail suppressed at the time, see B. Turner, Purnell's History of the 20th Century, Vol. II, p.521, (1968).
 3. see above, p.119 ff.

The papers were in the custody of my Department, and when the time came for the dispatch of the diplomatic bag, without waiting for further instructions from the Government, I took the responsibility of sending the necessary documents to America. After their receipt nothing more was heard of the pre-Casement agitation. 1

Captain Guy Gaunt, the naval attache in Washington, and also an agent of British propaganda, received the photostats of the extracts and showed them to some American pressmen, who showed great interest and a number of articles were published on the subject. However, before the issue could go any further, Sir Edward Grey stopped the further photographing and printing of extracts, though to a large extent it was too late to prevent the effects of the story. Both Cecil and Montgomery agreed with Newton concerning the release of the material, but if widespread publication had gone ahead, it would have been against the spirit of the principles which Masterman had established in his propaganda department.

It was only towards the end of the war that any sign of desertion of these principles became apparent, and part of the explanation lay in pressure brought to bear upon Wellington House by critics from the press who demanded a more adventurous policy. Leading the pack was Robert Donald, who in April 1917 was brought into a major confrontation with Masterman over a matter of propaganda policy. On 10 April, an article in the German newspaper Lokal-Anzeiger² gave details of a 'corpse-conversion factory'. Details of the article soon reached the British press and on 17 April The Times published the accusation that the Germans were boiling down human corpses in order to make soap. Robert Donald pressed both the Department of Information and the Foreign Office to use this story for propaganda purposes, and the

-
1. Lord Newton, Retrospection (London, 1929), p.226: The documents were sent 29 June 1916 and the following day Grey put a veto on the use of the material - see Casement file, P.O. 395/43, P.R.O. For more detailed discussion of the episode see A.J.Ward, Ireland and Anglo-American Relations 1899-1921 (London, 1969), p.101 ff., Charles Duff, Six Days to Shake an Empire (London, 1966), p.207 ff. and Peter Singleton-Gates, The Black Diaries (Paris, 1959).
 2. the article was by Karl Rorner and entitled 'The fighting north of Rheims'.

Foreign Office decided to investigate the whole story. Various evidence was discovered. An examination of the Daily Review of the Foreign Press revealed that on 1 April it had contained a report describing the discovery of a carriage full of dead soldiers in a German freight car in Holland, which had been shunted there by mistake. It was supposed to have gone to Liège where it was said the bodies were to be melted down.¹ The story had originated in a Belgian newspaper, the editor having learnt of the details from a Belgian officer. However, the truth of all this could not be substantiated, except that the Foreign Office were given a letter by Mr. R. McLeod M.P., which he had received from a Brigadier General Morrison who confirmed that the 'Kadaver Factory' rumours were true and who further claimed that the Germans had been seen taking bodies from Vimy Ridge, where there was a marked lack of graves. The bodies, it was believed, were melted down and used to make soap.² This was the kind of opportunity for propaganda in which a journalist such as Robert Donald took delight. He had advocated the immediate use of any atrocity story that emerged and with the domestic press giving the issue wide coverage, he pressed the Department of Information to do the same. Masterman, as ever, resisted the sensational and demanded that the evidence be absolutely concrete before the story was used. Masterman knew that using such a story in the domestic press and issuing it for consumption in neutral countries was not the same thing. If the evidence was insufficient to make the story a convincing one then it could not be used in neutral countries for it would be rapidly exposed and provide the Germans with an opportunity to discredit the allies. Lucy Masterman describes how the story was 'laughed out of court' at a meeting of the 'moot' at Wellington House.³ This was not the case at the Foreign Office, however, where a number of people believed the story worth exploiting. Much dispute thereupon followed. A great deal of argument centred on the use of the word 'kadaver'. Professors were called in with their dictionaries to determine whether such a word was used of the human body. Normally it

1. file on Kadaver episode, F.O. 395/147, P.R.O.

2. 18 April 1917, Kadaver file, F.O. 395/147, P.R.O.

3. Lucy Masterman, p.293.

was used in connexion with animal bodies. The Germans had many horses and slaughtered these on a large scale, no doubt utilising them for the making of soap, since the blockade made heavy demands on German ingenuity. It seemed incredible to Masterman and others, that the Germans would have allowed a newspaper article to contain such an admission which would so obviously provide ammunition for foreign propagandists and, naturally, when a wireless message was sent out from Carnarfon on 18 April 1917 relating the episode, the Germans issued an immediate denial, also by wireless. Balfour recognised that there was no documentary confirmation but commented:

While it should not be desirable that HMG should take any responsibility as regards the story pending the receipt of further information, there does not, in view of the many atrocious actions of which the Germans have been guilty, in defiance of all the dictates of civilisation and humanity, appear to be any reason why it should not be true. 1

So, as a result of this minute, Wellington House was instructed by Montgomery to go ahead with the preparation of pamphlets, in Portuguese, Spanish, Swedish and Dutch, and S.A. Guest, in charge of propaganda in Holland and in Germany, was ordered to collect information for German and Dutch editions. Masterman, very sceptical of the story, reluctantly went ahead with publication as instructed,² producing a four page pamphlet 'A Corpse-Conversion Factory' (London, 1917). This publication was a surrender to sensationalism and an abandonment of the cautious policy that had marked earlier propaganda. It marked the ultimate in atrocity propaganda.

Although atrocity stories loomed large amongst the material produced by official British propagandists, it would be misleading to suggest that this constituted the majority of work produced or that there was a group of writers whose constant task it was to produce work of this nature. Atrocity propaganda, as with other material, grew out of particular circumstances rather than general policy. An examination of the various authors of the pamphlets confirms that it is impossible to make any firm generalisation about the way in

1. minute by Balfour, 26 Apr. 1917, F.O. 395/147, P.R.O.

2. Lucy Masterman's account is rather inaccurate when she says that 'In after years, Masterman, not unjustly, prided himself that Wellington House had nothing to do with it,' see C.F.G. Masterman, p.293

which the pamphlets were written or even prepared. Many of the pamphlets published by Wellington House were not originally commissioned by the propaganda bureau. They were therefore written from a totally independent viewpoint. Naturally, they were selected by Wellington House because they made out a good case for Great Britain on the particular issue that they were discussing, but they were not censored or their content in any way adjusted to conform to an established set of ideas or policies laid down by the British Government. The same appears to be true of those pamphlets which were commissioned. Unfortunately, through the destruction of the relevant records, the process by which a pamphlet was commissioned, written and published cannot be exactly reconstructed. But as far as can be determined the Foreign Office did not dictate in any strict fashion the content of propaganda pamphlets, nor did Wellington House place severe restrictions upon the pamphleteers. This enabled them to take advantage of the offer of various writers and journalists¹ to produce pamphlets for propaganda purposes. In a land where free speech was revered and where, during the course of the war, the Foreign Office actually removed its censorship control over the press², it was hardly likely that such writers would produce works which were anything but their own work. Wellington House preferred to employ the talents of established authors, journalists and academics, to setting up their own bureaucracy of unknown writers producing material to order and according to some strict pattern laid down and carefully scrutinised throughout by the chief officials of Wellington House. This is not to say that Wellington House did not discuss or examine the pamphlets produced. On the contrary, we know from Lucy Masterman's biography of her husband that there were daily meetings of the 'moot' at which matters of policy were discussed by the leading officials of Wellington House. Choice of pamphlet material was made here and pamphlets were examined before approval for publication was given. Any pamphlets which were of direct interest to the Foreign Office were also passed on to it before publication.³

1. see above, p.17 and p.81.

2. see above, p.25 ff.

3. this was during the period 1914-16 when the propaganda bureau was independent of the Foreign Office - see chapter 2 on organisation.

The result of Wellington House policy was the production of pamphlets which varied greatly in style, tone and ideas. Established academics such as Gilbert Murray were given complete freedom to write as they wished. In his book The Foreign Policy of Sir Edward Grey 1906-15 (Oxford, 1915), Murray made a totally personal assessment of Grey's actions, admitting that as a radical he had not held much brief with the Foreign Secretary, but eventually came to sympathize with him where foreign policy was concerned. Murray's pamphlet entitled Ethical Problems of the War (London, 1915), was simply reprinted from The Inquirer and was an address given by him to the National Conference of Unitarians, Liberal Christians, Free Christians and Presbyterians. The pamphlet was published because Murray argued that the First World War was necessary for the protection of Belgium, though it emphasised throughout the horrors of war and how little justification for war exists. In 1918, the Ministry of Information issued another book by Gilbert Murray, Faith, War and Policy (London, 1918), which consisted of a collection of his essays on various issues from ethics of war to the democratic control of foreign policy, including essays on such controversial issues as India, Ireland and America. All were written as he wished, in his own style.

Various pamphlets were published which contained criticisms of British government, both past and present. These were usually on the subject of Ireland. In England and Germany and the Irish Question (London, 1917), an 'English catholic' commented on the various mistakes made by the British government but challenged the right of the Germans to criticise, considering their own conduct towards Alsace and Poland. Hugh A. Law, an Irish M.P., in Why is Ireland at War (Dublin and London, 1916), argued that the Allies were the champions of national rights and Ireland ought to recognise this forgiving 'England's age-long denial of Irish national rights'. He observed that 'English foreign policy has often shown itself narrow, cold and selfish' but that Germany had shown herself to be an opponent of nationality and democracy while Britain was slowly growing to meet them:

The old narrow Puritan, self-righteousness is not yet

quite gone from her mind, nor the old spirit of ascendancy from her politics; but they move. Her working constitution grows gradually more democratic; her foreign policy less insular, less aggressive. She is making reparation for her one great sin against the principle of nationality.

Wellington House was quite prepared to accept such free criticism of British policy because the pamphlet admitted that the war was a just one. British propagandists calculated that the power of this argument would be enhanced, its veracity more readily accepted, if it was accompanied by such open criticism of the British. A pamphlet which praised as correct everything the British did was deemed less likely to have the necessary impact.

It would be equally misleading, however, to suggest that all Wellington House pamphlets were either entirely open in this fashion, or were of the detached, academic nature favoured by Masterman. In the pamphlets of Archibald Hurd, the tone was highly emotional, even hysterical, as the naval activities of the Germans were exposed to raking criticism. In Murder at Sea (London, 1916), itself an emotionally charged title, Hurd ranted against the activities of the German U-boats which had resulted in the sinking of the Lusitania:

It was the Germans.....who pressed the submarine boat into their service in order to enable them to commit acts of villainy and murder of a character and on a scale which excel any demoniacal scheme which ever entered the brain of a drink-soddened pirate of the past....

and promised revenge

from every crested wave in every sea the same dirge will continue to rise and fill the ears of men, women and children until such crimes have been punished and expiated in the one and only way.

In Submarines and Zeppelins (London, 1916), Hurd implied that the Germans were not playing by the rules: 'what would have been said in the old duelling days of a man who agreed to fight with swords, and then, at the critical moment, when the seconds had withdrawn, whipped out a pistol and killed his

opponent?' But Hurd was able to console himself with the thought that, 'in honourable warfare British submarines have been at least as successful'. The accusations levelled by Hurd against the Germans were so violent in their nature that his works may be classified as atrocity propaganda, but comparing the works of Bryce or Toynbee with those of Hurd, we find that the work of the former has none of the emotional intensity of the latter who considered that, 'the fingers of many of its (Germany's) officers and men are dripping with the blood of the innocent'.¹

It is even more difficult to reconcile the works of Hurd, or of any of the atrocity propagandists, with the pamphlet produced by J.W. Headlam². In 1917 he wrote The Starvation of Germany (London, 1917) in which he questioned the hypocrisy of the Germans who claimed that the blockade was immoral. Headlam argued that the war was total:

those who remain at home are deliberately working under an organized scheme for the service of the army and the conduct of the war just as much as those away in the field. All food-stuff imported into Germany directly and immediately adds to the combatant power of Germany.

This argument could hardly be reconciled with the atrocity propaganda released by other British propagandists. But all these apparent contradictions were less of an embarrassment to Wellington House than might be imagined. For Wellington House pamphlets did not bear any indication that they were official British propaganda. The only works published by H.M.S.O. were official documents, government reports and other similar material. Otherwise propaganda pamphlets and books were contracted out to a variety of publishers so that they could in no way be traced to one particular source. In that context, consistency of ideas expressed in different pamphlets was not so important. Writers could put forward their own views about the war and even make suggestions which might conflict with official government policy, or about which there had not yet been any official pronouncement. L.B. Namier, who

1. Archibald Hurd, Outlawry at Sea (London, 1915), reprinted from The Fortnightly Review, July 1915.
 2. see above, p.18, footnote 7.

worked for the propaganda bureau, in his pamphlet Danzig-Poland's Outlet to the Sea (London, 1917)¹, argued that the reconstitution of Poland must include Danzig, though neither the British Government nor the Foreign Office had formulated any clear views on this subject. In an earlier pamphlet, Germany and Eastern Europe (London, 1915), Namier argued for the dissolution of the Austrian Empire and the reconstitution of the Near East on the basis of nationality. In the introduction to this work, H.A.L. Fisher pointed out that he did not agree with such recommendations but that the recommendations were less important than the knowledge Namier had of the Slavonic peoples. The content of the pamphlet is nevertheless remarkable, considering it was an officially inspired work, though privately published, and that Namier worked as an adviser to Wellington House and could only have produced such a pamphlet with their full knowledge and approval. The Foreign Office were not, it appears, alarmed by the expression of such ideas, perhaps relying upon the fact that the pamphlet could not be directly linked with them, because it had a private publisher. The foreign reader would recognise the pamphlet as propaganda but it might have come from a variety of sources which were unofficial.² The personnel of Wellington House were not known by the domestic public, a reflection of the secrecy which had surrounded this organisation's activities, and it was therefore very unlikely that anyone abroad would have linked Namier's name with official propaganda.

It was only with the appearance of the Ministry of Information, when the veil of secrecy was removed and the activities of official propagandists brought out into the open, that the attitude towards the content of propaganda needed to be revised. To some extent the issue was avoided, as the new Ministry reduced drastically the number of pamphlet publications. Nevertheless, it was important that those which were published, now more clearly identifiable as official propaganda, should reflect official government policy. The propagandists thus took the lead in trying to force the

1. reprinted from The 19th Century and After, Feb.1917.

2. see above, p.20.

government to make some firm commitments about British war aims. Wickham Steed¹ describes how Lloyd George was pressed into making some firm statement about the problem of the Slav nationalities by the propagandists of Lord Northcliffe's department and in 1918 the Ministry of Information published Lloyd George's statement of war aims which he made to trade union leaders in January of that year. Gilbert Murray produced yet another pamphlet, this time on the League of Nations:

We must be prepared on occasion to allow a Congress of Powers to settle questions which we should prefer to treat as purely domestic. We must tame our pride a little. And in return we shall both form a habit of friendly consultation with other Powers instead of hostile intrigue, and shall be saved from the deadly dilemma of either provoking war by making preparations or inviting attack by going unprepared. 2

Viscount Grey, on the same subject,³ made a similar kind of plea, that members of the League should accept restrictions upon national action.

The few pamphlets of 1918 represent the only attempt made to link the content of official propaganda directly with the declared foreign policy of the British government.

The variety of content apparent in pamphlet propaganda was less the case with pictorial propaganda, though it took very many forms. Lantern slides, cigarette cards, photographs, films, paintings, were all used for propaganda purposes, but generally they were all straightforward in their content, working according to the principle that the camera could not lie. Thus most pictorial propaganda was simply the faithful reproduction of war scenes. Photographs were mainly of the front, the soldiers there and their weapons. The intention in showing photographs was as much to be informative, as it was to be persuasive. Though photographs were issued demonstrating the destruction that had been wrought in Belgium, atrocity pictures did not appear very much in the great numbers

1. Through Thirty years 1892-1922 (London, 1924), Vol. II, p.244.
 2. The League of Nations and the Democratic Idea (London, 1918).
 3. The League of Nations (London, 1918).

of photographs distributed by the propaganda bureau. There is no evidence available to suggest that there was any great interest in photographs of atrocities as far as the British propagandists were concerned. There is certainly no suggestion that any faking of photographs took place, whereas the French propaganda organisation, equivalent to Wellington House, La Maison de la Presse, had a large photographic section which produced specially faked photographs. Lantern-slides and cigarette cards were usually taken from original photographs in the possession of the official British propagandists. The paintings produced by the war artists attached to British propaganda organisations produced their own impressions of the war, without being directed in any way as to what the content of their work should be.¹

The pattern of information being as important as persuasion was continued in film propaganda. The novelty of the film medium ensured that the films would have considerable impact. The content of the films tended, therefore, to be simple rather than complex. The emphasis was upon the demonstration of Allied efforts and the revelation of their fighting strength. There was nothing more impressive than the films of the British dreadnoughts, or of the earliest tanks after they had seen their first action in 1916, especially to audiences who had never seen such sophisticated examples of weaponry before.² The titles of the films and their content reveal that they were intended to be newsreels, keep the audience informed about the war, showing the efforts being made on their behalf, or showing their own men engaged in the war. The films were propaganda in that the facts that they portrayed were highly selected and not intended to be objective. They showed Allied victories, or allied troops in action. By the time the use of film as a form of propaganda became widespread, there was less need to dwell upon a justification of the war, but rather to rouse people to support the war and see it through to a victorious finish. Films were designed therefore to build morale amongst allied audiences,

1. see above, p.106 ff.

2. see above, p.113.

and persuade neutrals of allied strength and determination to win the war. The earliest and most famous film was 'Britain Prepared' which showed the efforts being made at home in the factories to further the war effort and the end product, the army, and, above all, the might of the British navy. A series of films was made of the action at the Western Front, depicting the Battle of Arras, the Battle of the Somme, the Battle of Peronne, the capture of Messines, and the Battle of Ancre which became known as the 'tanks film'. The British Fleet with its awe-inspiring dreadnoughts was a popular subject in such films as Glimpses of the British Fleet, and The King's Visit to the Fleet. There were films of British prisoner of war camps, one in particular at Dorchester, demonstrating the humane treatment afforded German prisoners of war; One film entitled 'Repairing War's Ravages' revealed the effects of Zeppelin air raids, particularly on the area in and around Roehampton, and it was known as the 'Roehampton' film. Films of the munitions workers and of the women's land army continued the demonstration of the efforts of the British civilian population. The most popular films in the allied countries, for which they were specially made, were those depicting the multi-national features of the British army, and the international cooperation that lay behind the Allied war effort: the Portugese Contingent, the Chinese Labour Contingent, the South African Labour Contingent, the Egyptian Labour Corps, the Visit of the Canadian Rangers to Ireland, the Sons of the Empire, U.S. troops passing through London. The effect on foreign audiences when they saw their own troops appear on the screen was quite dramatic, as various consular reports confirmed in 1917. By modern standards the films lacked sophistication but this assumes a highly critical and experienced cinema audience, which was not the case during the First World War. Direct propaganda in the form of open denunciation of the enemy was not necessary. Instead, the more subtle approach was favoured, whereby the newsreel, seemingly giving only information about the war, showed allied troops always as active and successful. The enemy would only be shown if he was a prisoner, or defeated or dead, his weapons shown only in destruction. In this way, the natural preferences of the audience, their patriotic bias, in the case

of allies, were fed and reinforced by the subject matter of the films. This method was much more successful in getting people to support the war effort (in the case of allied audiences) and recognised the degree of commitment of the British forces (which would be appreciated by neutral audiences as well), than attempts to appeal to their moral natures through atrocity propaganda. The latter kind of film was only served up in 1918 and usually for domestic consumption, by the Ministry of Information, usually depicting German evil-doings in Belgium.

But any statement concerning the success of one kind of film as against another cannot be made with any firmness, since no measure of the effect of propaganda exists. One can only examine the evidence of various foreign consuls, journalists, and others who witnessed the considerable impact of cinema shows which were immediate in their effect upon a large mass. Cinema going was such a new element in popular entertainment that it was likely that any kind of film would attract a large audience and have obvious impact, especially if a Charlie Chaplin film was on the same bill. The problem where the pamphlet was concerned was even greater, since it was impossible to witness its immediate impact. Only its circulation and the numbers sold could be produced as any kind of evidence, and precise figures, unfortunately do not exist. Again one has to rely on the incomplete evidence of consuls, journalists, and the many people who wrote to congratulate Wellington House on their propaganda pamphlets.¹ Thus, any final observations about the efficacy and success of the content of official British propaganda can only be speculative, being based on common-sense generalisation.

1. 100 samples of Wellington House correspondence reporting on the utility of propaganda, 1916, INF. 4/5, P.R.O.

Chapter 5 - British Propaganda in Allied and Neutral
Countries 1914-18: A Reappraisal

The examination that this thesis contains of the organisation of British propaganda in allied and neutral countries during the First World War, the methods that were employed, and the content of the propaganda, has revealed that the development of all three was both continuous and progressive. It is precisely this feature, the continuity of development, that has been neglected by previous historians. Few paid attention to the organisation of propaganda during the years 1914-17. Instead, all emphasis is placed upon the creation of the Ministry of Information and its short and controversial existence. The present standard work, British Propaganda at Home and in the United States 1914-17 (Cambridge, Mass., 1935) by James Duane Squires, is perhaps, unintentionally, the origin of this line of interpretation. Squires's work was based on material in the Hoover War Library. The documents available to him were therefore very limited and although his attention was specifically drawn to the early period of the war, and though he attached great importance to the propaganda carried out in those years, his analysis of propaganda organisation was to have a very misleading effect. Squires argued that:

From a useful sideline in the conduct of warfare, managed almost exclusively by civilian volunteers, propaganda came to be so important during the World War that it was adopted officially as an indispensable adjunct of the war government staff. 1

Squires then described the various unofficial volunteer organisations that produced and distributed pamphlets in the early years of the war.² Squires knew of the existence of Wellington House and gave a description of its growth and expansion. He recognised that most of the pamphlets published were 'produced chiefly by the official bureau'³ and that the work of the unofficial organisations was 'of some, although not of major, significance'.⁴ However, he was unaware of the

1. Squires, p.12.

2. Squires, p.16 ff.

3. Squires, p.17.

4. Idem.

true position of Wellington House and of the significance of these volunteer bodies in relation to it.¹ As a result, the unofficial bodies appear to be more important than they were and the references to a 'useful sideline' managed by 'civilian volunteers'² gave a misleading impression about the official nature of the work of Wellington House. Squires did not have the opportunity of reading Lucy Masterman's biography of her husband which gave the most detailed and accurate account of the activities of Wellington House, as it was published four years after his own book.³ Another work which attached great significance to the part played by British propaganda in bringing the United States into the war was Propaganda for War (Norman, 1939) by H.C. Peterson. Once again the historian in question was familiar with the existence and development of official British propaganda organisations, but his analysis lacked precision and the result was vagueness. Peterson gave the impression that there were many independent propaganda organisations which were not connected with a responsible propaganda department. Although he went on to describe Wellington House and particularly the work of its representative in the United States, Sir Gilbert Parker, based on Parker's own article in Harper's Monthly Magazine for March 1918, he failed to give a true idea of the degree of organisation that lay behind this campaign. Thus, although these three works exist which do give fair and reasonable attention to the propaganda work of the early years of the war, it is not surprising to find a more recent historian, Doreen Collins in Aspects of British Politics 1914-19 (London, 1965), saying the following:

because the use of propaganda was relatively ill-developed, few positive steps were taken in America during the first half of the war and those few steps were empirical, ad hoc measures rather than part of a concerted policy.⁴

Her work is thus concentrated, when it comes to discuss propaganda, upon the Ministry of Information. Ironically, even the Ministry of Information is ignored and instead

1. see above, p.20 ff.

2. see Squires, p.12.

3. C.F.G. Masterman, a biography (London, 1939).

4. Doreen Collins, p.270.

attention is paid to another organisation that was created in 1918, Lord Northcliffe's committee which was never part of the Ministry but separate and independent. Charged with propaganda in enemy countries, Northcliffe devoted his considerable energies to just that. His efforts attracted considerable attention both then and since. Campbell Stuart's book, Secrets of Crewe House (London, 1920) recorded the work of this committee, and various of its members, particularly Wickham Steed,¹ testified to its effectiveness, arguing that it was responsible for the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian armies. The Germans listed Northcliffe as one of their major enemies and struck a medal to record the fact. As a result, historians narrowed the focus of their attention. In his book, Propaganda in the Next War (London, 1938), S.G. Rogerson talked of the Ministry of Propaganda under Lord Northcliffe. He then pointed out that it was not until August 1918 that Crewe House had pamphlets prepared and that they were not ready for distribution until September. Rogerson then argued that twelve million pamphlets had already been distributed by the War Office which, he claimed, 'seems to show clearly enough that the responsibility for propaganda had until then been energetically and ably discharged by the Admiralty and War Office.'² Rogerson had no idea of the existence of Wellington House. A more respected work was that of H.D. Lasswell, Propaganda Technique in the World War (London, 1927), but this too paid little attention to organisation before 1918, although organisation was not the author's prime consideration. Similarly, J.A.C. Brown in Techniques of Persuasion (Penguin, 1963), though his main intention was to consider the psychological aspects and implications of propaganda, made the following generalisation:

The First World War represents the earliest occasion when, towards its close at any rate, propaganda became a fully fledged instrument making use of a scientific approach which attempted some sort of objective technique. ³

He was actually referring to the department headed by Lord Northcliffe.

1. see above p.145 and footnote 1.

2. S.G. Rogerson, p.18.

3. J.A.C. Brown, p.82.

Perhaps, most surprising of all, is the recently published series of studies on the British Information services, written by past or present members of the Foreign Office - surprising in that they contain basic errors. Thus Marjorie Ogilvy Webb in The Government Explains: A Study of Information Services (London, 1965), gives the date of the creation of the Home Office Bureau and the War Propaganda Bureau as 1916. She may have been relying upon the reference work by N.B. Dearle, A Dictionary of Official War-Time Organisation (London, 1928), which said of the War Propaganda Bureau, 'app. by the Govt. apparently in 1916 or earlier'.¹ Sir Fife Clark in The Central Office of Information (London, 1970), mistakenly describes the Department of Information as being set up originally under Lord Carson. Sir Robert Marett in Through the Back Door: An Inside View of the British Information Services (London, 1968) gives the most accurate account but his coverage of the organisation and methods of Wellington House is very sketchy and highly subjective.

The overall impression left by all the various works on British propaganda coincides with the views of those in 1918 who took control of its organisation (particularly Lord Northcliffe) and with the views of Robert Donald, who was the major critic of propaganda during the early years of the war.² This view was that propaganda during the years 1914-17 was ill-organised, arrangements being ad hoc, resulting in considerable inefficiency, wastage of material, duplication of effort, and slowness to exploit opportunities for propaganda. The advent of the new ministry is believed to have brought about a fundamental change. The new men were essentially journalists and they brought with them a much more positive approach to news. They were quicker to exploit sensational stories and made much more use of the domestic and foreign press to the exclusion of the pamphlet which, it was thought, had been overworked by Wellington House. Other ventures of the latter were also run down, such as illustrated newspapers. The Ministry of Information made considerable use of pictorial means of propaganda, especially the cinema

1. N.B. Dearle, p.129

2. see above, p.33 ff.

and also war artists, and Lord Beaverbrook was credited with being the first man to realise the potential of both these propaganda mediums when he had been in charge of Canadian publicity. The negative, rather restrictive approach of Wellington House and the Foreign Office, which was considered to have persisted in the Department of Information, whereby propaganda tended to be academic, in tone and aimed at a more intellectual audience, was replaced, the argument suggests, by a much more positive policy, which sought to make propaganda take the offensive rather than the defensive attitude, which relied on original propaganda rather than counter-propaganda, and which was aimed at a popular audience. According to this interpretation, three years of comparative failure were followed by one year of spectacular success.

What explanation may be given for the way in which the organisations responsible for official British propaganda in the period 1914-17 have either been totally ignored or so seriously misrepresented by various writers, whether historians or students of propaganda methods and techniques, that a consideration of the history of British propaganda in the First World War is synonymous with the study of what occurred in 1918?

The immediate and most obvious explanation is that propaganda work in the early years of the war was carried out in complete secrecy. The British government did not want to be directly linked with any of the material that was being distributed and thus no official propaganda was ever published with an official stamp or any other indication that it was the direct product of the government's propaganda department.¹ So effective was the cover, that Parliament was largely ignorant of Wellington House. Questions about Masterman were usually met by evasion. In November 1915 Asquith, in answer to various questions, informed the House of Commons that Masterman was receiving £1,200 from Secret Service Funds and that he was engaged on very important work.² Finally, he was forced to admit that Masterman was,

1. see above, p.143.

2. 30 Nov. 1915, Hansard, 5th ser. Vol. LXXVI, Col.587.

continuing certain work which he was requested by the Government to undertake at the beginning of the war. The work is of a highly confidential nature, and much of its efficiency depends upon its being conducted in secret, and it would not be in the public interest to make any further statements concerning it. ¹

This marked the first recognition that Masterman was working for the government, but it was not made clear what his work was. It is hard to understand how such secrecy was maintained when Masterman's first actions had been to hold two conferences of writers and journalists to advise on propaganda. Presumably they were either sworn to secrecy, or it was not made clear to them whether any action concerning propaganda would be taken or whether any organisation existed to carry out the work. What is apparent is that secrecy was maintained completely until the end of 1915 and then partially until the advent to power of Lloyd George. Moreover, this did not help the image of the propaganda organisations. Secrecy automatically aroused suspicion, especially from a parliament increasingly sensitive about its loss of power in the running of the country's affairs in wartime. Throughout 1916 Parliament was asking questions about the organisation of propaganda, inquiring whether the Foreign Office had overall control and whether the expenditure of Wellington House was closely scrutinised.² Speculations about Masterman's salary continued and he was believed to be taking large sums from the Secret Service Fund.³ Questions about his personal position were still being asked in 1918.⁴ The problem facing Masterman and Wellington House was that no effective reply could be made because of the limitations of secrecy. The situation was made still worse by Masterman's loss of his seat in the House of Commons. Upon his appointment to the Duchy of Lancaster and therefore to a place in the cabinet, Masterman was obliged by the

-
1. 1 Dec. 1915, Hansard, *ibid.*, col.704, cited in Squires, p.30.
 2. question from Mr. Ginnell, 30 Mar. 1916, Hansard, 5th ser., LXXXI, 875.
 3. questions to the Prime Minister, 1 Mar. 1916, Hansard, 5th ser., LXXX, 1147.
 4. question from Mr. King to P.M., 7 Aug. 1918, Hansard, 5th ser., CIX, 1354.

parliamentary law of the time to vacate his seat and seek re-election. He failed in his various attempts to seek re-election during 1914¹ and eventually he resigned his cabinet seat in February 1915, upon the request of the chief whip, John Gulland.² Masterman ceased, therefore, to be an insider where Parliament was concerned and was unable to answer for himself through the various unofficial contacts he would have had as a member of parliament. But even as a member of parliament, he could have made no reply to the criticism of the British government that poured from the press, accusing the cabinet of failing to set up an organisation to run propaganda and for failing to issue material stating the British case in the war. Much of the unofficial propaganda of the First World War was the product of the press, particularly of the papers run by Lord Northcliffe and Lord Rothermere. There is little doubt that they believed that they were the best qualified to conduct a propaganda campaign. It is not clear whether they knew of the existence of Wellington House, but if they did then they were obliged not to reveal their knowledge. The press, therefore, contented itself with criticisms of the lack of British propaganda during the period 1914-16, and then, when the organisations running propaganda became public knowledge, switched to condemning its inadequacy. This persistent attitude of criticism is not easily explained, but one possible explanation is that the press, towards the end of the war, became increasingly envious of the amount of paper available for use by Wellington House, while their own supplies were being drastically reduced owing to an increasing paper shortage.³ Their concern was expressed in the paper conference of January 1918⁴ when it was agreed that the paper consumption of Masterman's department should be greatly reduced.

Masterman's sense of frustration at his inability to reply to his critics was made much worse when he found that people in authority readily accepted the criticisms aimed

1. see Cameron Hazlehurst, Politicians at War, July 1914 to May 1915 (London, 1971), p.202.

2. Lucy Masterman, p.270.

3. See Lucy Masterman, p.291.

4. 19 Jan. 1918, conference between Buchan and Newspaper Proprietors Association.

at his department. The Donald reports were acknowledged by Lloyd George as being accurate and Masterman was very disappointed in Lloyd George who gave him little opportunity to defend the work of the official propaganda bureau. This was easily explained. By 1916 relations between the two men had become very strained, since Masterman held Lloyd George partially responsible for his failure to achieve re-election,¹ and what had been a close friendship had been steadily eroded. Thus Masterman, at one time in charge of propaganda, found himself passed over, first by Buchan and later by Lord Beaverbrook. At the end of the war, Masterman was under Arnold Bennett who commented, 'Considering that he had been a Cabinet Minister early in the war, and that I politically a nobody, was now his superior, he behaved excellently in a very trying situation.'² Masterman received no recognition from the British government for the work that he had carried out during the war, though he was decorated by the Belgian government for propaganda work undertaken on their behalf. Thus he felt little inclined to record the work that he had done. Moreover, once the war was at an end, most people wished to forget propaganda. The word itself was discredited. It was synonymous with lies and deliberate distortion of the truth. The disillusioned troops returning from the front poured ridicule on its worst excesses, the atrocity stories. The ministry was disbanded and its work rapidly forgotten. No full and authoritative history of British propaganda during the First World War was ever written. Masterman was the obvious person to undertake such a task, as Major General Sir George Aston pointed out,³ also observing that Masterman had foreseen clearly what would happen:

At the very outset, when he embarked on the work, he explained to his colleagues that they would have to labour in secret and be subject to criticism of all kinds just and unjust, to none of which they could reply; and, further, when their work was done, it was most improbable that they would receive any credit or even acknowledgment for their services.

-
1. for detailed discussion of the whole affair see Cameron Hazlehurst, p.202 ff.
 2. cited in Reginald Pound, Arnold Bennett (London, 1952), p.270.
 3. 'Propaganda and the Father of it', Cornhill Magazine, Vol.70, 1931.

It has thus been left to later historians to attempt an evaluation of what was done in the war in propaganda, but they have been hindered by the lack of adequate documentation, for after the war, in 1920, the whole of the records of the Ministry of Information, apart from material given to the Imperial War Museum, and a number of documents given to the Foreign Office and eventually the Public Record Office, were completely destroyed. Wellington House had over 22,000 files on various countries in the world and the propaganda employed in them. All this went, as did the records of the meetings and conferences at Wellington House where policy decisions were made in the early years of the war. Masterman left no papers so the historian is forced to rely upon Wellington House communications, chiefly with the Foreign Office, for his information. The Ministry of Information documents in the Public Record Office consist of papers deposited by H.A. Taylor, the biographer of Robert Donald¹ and of material collected in 1937-38 when the possibilities of propaganda organisation in the next war were being investigated.

It is the contention of this thesis that the efficiency and achievements of British propaganda during the early years of the war have been greatly underestimated. Although there had been no organisation before the war, Masterman was not slow in establishing a viable propaganda bureau.² The voluntary, unofficial organisations were an embarrassment to the official propaganda bureau³ which had formulated a clear propaganda policy in conjunction with the Foreign Office and a definite methodology, particularly in relation to the United States, which was the agreed prime target. Doreen Collins's statement,⁴ therefore, that measures in America in the early years were empirical and ad hoc rather than part of a concerted policy, is decidedly inaccurate. The special emphasis placed upon work in the U.S.A. and, more particularly, the activities of Sir Gilbert Parker,⁵

1. H.A. Taylor, Robert Donald (London, 1934)

2. see above, p.16 ff.

3. see above, p.20 ff.

4. see above, p. 150

5. see above, p.83.

ere a clear refutation of this argument. Although H.C. Peterson described in detail Parker's work,¹ he failed to stress the link that existed between him and Wellington House. Parker was not working alone but was part of a much larger organisation, whose scope and complexity has not been recognised.

The evidence of the vast propaganda output of Wellington House is undeniable, an output that reached all over the world, issued in a variety of languages, and distributed through a variety of forms and communicating media.² This considerable variety of methods employed by Wellington House was not simply an accident or a result of broad experimentation. It stemmed mainly from varied demands. The fundamental policy of Wellington House was that those with local knowledge ought to be the ones to advise on the most applicable methods to be employed and the most relevant content. Local conditions, politics and culture had to be the deciding factors where choice of propaganda was concerned. Inevitably this gave propaganda a piecemeal, even negative look, with Wellington House responding rather than dictating to their representatives abroad. Their policy, however, was no less coherent or positive because of this. It was a simple recognition of the need to design propaganda to suit the recipient.

As the war progressed, Wellington House, responded to criticism and there was a steady improvement of the efficiency of propaganda, particularly with regard to distribution and to the flow of information between central and local organisations, especially following the creation of the Department of Information in 1917. But the methods employed by the Department and in its wake the Ministry of Information remained much the same, the changes that took place being ones of emphasis.³ Continuity was thus maintained and the changes that did occur may be seen more in an evolutionary than revolutionary light.

1. see above, p.150.

2. see Chapter 3.

3. see above, p.122 ff.

Therefore, although the Ministry of Information grew out of the criticisms of and dissatisfaction with the previous organisations responsible for propaganda, it was so much a continuation of what had gone before that it is difficult to accept the high level of criticism aimed at Wellington House was justified. It is, of course, impossible to compare the success of propaganda put out by the Ministry of Information with that put out by the organisations that preceded it. The passage of time and the changing context of events that this brought make an evaluation of comparative success hardly feasible even if there were figures and measurable statistics, and there were none of these. No attempt was made then to measure the effects of propaganda, and it is apparent that even in this era of sophisticated sociological sampling, that no definite measurement of the effects of propaganda has yet been established. The use of statistical surveys makes generalisation a little easier, but such techniques were unknown in the First World War when reliance was placed upon individual testimony, whether by word of mouth, letter or report. Without firm evidence, it is difficult to prove the case for a complete re-evaluation of the work of Wellington House, but the lack of scientific evidence does evoke a very sceptical view of the critics of Wellington House. The Donald reports, which were the basis of the attack on the earlier propaganda organisations, appear in a very unsatisfactory light. Their very hasty production (the first report was produced in a week) was a reflection of the lack of detailed investigation and yet the reports contained the most sweeping generalisations about the conduct of propaganda during the early years of the war. The more closely the reports are examined, the more it appears that they were the product not of a detached observer seeking to make a careful, scientific analysis, but of a highly committed person whose ideas were firmly established long before the reports were undertaken. Donald had demonstrated his hostility towards the Foreign Office and the Civil Service ever since the war began. He was only one of many newspaper editors who became obsessed with their own sense of power, who made it their task to challenge the policies of the government at every turn, and who appeared to believe that

the press had an absolute prerogative of the truth. The work of the propaganda departments was a natural target for this was the home ground of the newspapermen, publicity. Donald and others, especially Lords Northcliffe and Rothermere, believed that they could do the job much better and said so repeatedly, while Wellington House could make no reply. All the Donald reports were constantly emphasising the need to employ journalists and journalistic methods in propaganda and to remove this sphere of activity away from the amateurs of the civil service. Donald consistently demanded that propaganda take the offensive. Even though many reforms were made in organisation, in direct response to Donald's criticisms, Donald himself was never satisfied, until control of propaganda was finally handed over to the 'press gang' in 1918, including himself. His whole campaign of criticism was suggestive of personal obsession rather than fair criticism. Donald's own work as Director of Propaganda in Neutral Countries was brief and undistinguished. He was appointed on 18 February 1918 and he resigned on 2 April 1918. By August 1918 he had returned to his old habit of criticising propaganda organisation.¹

The evidence produced by Robert Donald was scanty and when he did produce any kind of figures to prove his point, his arguments were effectively countered.² In order to evaluate the work of Wellington House in contrast to the Ministry of Information, one can only compare organisation, methods, and general efficiency. There is no doubt that the Ministry of Information was altogether more open and aggressive in its methods than earlier organisations, and this explains why the Ministry has tended to capture attention at the expense of the latter. However, it is in the explanations of this greater aggressiveness that the greatest injustice has been done. The simple assumption has been that the Ministry was much more active and therefore effective because its organisation was more coherent and efficient. But Wellington House was highly organised and was constantly improving its efficiency, a process which led ultimately to the creation of the Ministry itself. How can one explain the increase in activity the Ministry appears to represent?

1. see above, pp.78-79.

2. see above, p.48 ff

The explanation lies in the war itself. Opportunities for propaganda could only develop from the circumstances of war. In 1918 the war was clearly moving in favour of the allies. Although there was the setback of the March offensive and the following German assaults, it had been apparent from the entry of the United States into the war in April 1917, that once her industrial wealth could be translated into military power and her manpower effectively tapped, then Germany would be on the defensive. The Ministry of Information could afford to adopt an openly aggressive tone as the situation was right for a propaganda offensive. Now the U.S.A. had entered the war, there was no need to court her sympathies, but to make it clear the efforts that war would demand of her nation. No such opportunity had ever presented itself to the earlier propaganda organisations. The first three years of the war were filled with disasters and reverses. There was little opportunity to take the offensive in propaganda if it meant extolling great victories. Propaganda had to be defensive, concentrating on countering German accusations rather than adopting an aggressive tone which would have meant the manufacture of numerous lies, a policy which was not acceptable to Masterman or the Foreign Office. Instead full advantage had to be taken of German errors, such as the sinking of the Lusitania or the execution of Nurse Cavell. The U.S.A. was a neutral country, and had to be treated with caution for there were always British actions to explain away, such as the blockade, or the handling of the Irish problem. The more quiet and seemingly negative approach adopted by Wellington House was the most appropriate considering the progress of the war.

The strongest evidence in support of this argument comes from America, where the barnstorming methods of German propaganda were eventually discredited and the German ambassador, Bernstorff recalled. British methods, on the other hand, were much more subtle, as demonstrated by the work of Gilbert Parker, who emphasised the need to let the Americans make up their own minds.¹ Parker was widely supported in this approach, from the British ambassador, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, to all the officials at Wellington House and the Foreign Office. The latter

1. see above, p.83 ff.

adopted the policy of giving information to American journalists so that they could write their own articles, rather than having the articles ready prepared. Any attempt to brow-beat the Americans was avoided for it was realised what their reaction would be, especially towards Britain with whom relations were always highly sensitive for historical reasons. Even in 1917, when Geoffrey Butler took charge of British propaganda in the U.S.A. and new attitudes were beginning to emerge following America's entry into the war, a cautious approach to the American press was required, as Butler testified: 'Anything directly attacking the Germans or praising the British or appearing to wish to influence American newspapers is turned down at once.'¹ Nevertheless, British propagandists had to drop their previous approach and adopt more direct methods, as was exemplified by the Northcliffe Mission to the United States in 1917², but this in itself was a testimony to the effectiveness of previous propaganda. The United States were surprised when they did enter the war to find how close the allies were to defeat and they had to be re-educated to make them conscious of the very real efforts that were needed of them. In the light of various testimony, the verdict of Z.A.B. Zeman may be confirmed that, 'Allied, and especially British propaganda in the United States had a professional touch about it and available evidence points to the fact that it was highly effective.'³ Lord Beaverbrook, himself, in an article in the Sunday Express 1919, testified as to the efficiency of Wellington House, even though his own ministry had been set up to replace what had been considered an inefficient organisation:

Lord Beaverbrook, when he became Minister of Information at the beginning of 1918, only took over and developed an organisation that already existed and which, though discouraged by Ministers and too often attacked by the Press, was doing the work which extorted the admiration of the Prussian leader. For the work of the old department Mr. Masterman and Colonel John Buchan can claim the credit. They laboured diligently to convert the neutrals of which America was the most important, and according to hostile evidence they succeeded. The difficulty of this original department was that it had too little power and practically no direct access to the Cabinet. 4

-
1. Butler to Montgomery, 6 July 1917, F.O. 395/74, P.R.O.
 2. see file on Northcliffe Mission, F.O. 395/83, P.R.O.
 3. Z.A.B. Zeman, A Diplomatic History of the 1st World War (London, 1971), p.170.
 4. cited in Lucy Masterman, p.300.

Lord Beaverbrook's comments were especially relevant where he referred to the lack of access to the cabinet. Following his resignation from the cabinet in February 1915,¹ Masterman, though still head of propaganda had no direct access to the cabinet, and the same problem faced Buchan when he became head of propaganda in 1917. Masterman was forced to rely on the Foreign Office, which was hardly satisfactory, as that office felt it ought to control propaganda. Thus Masterman could never properly convey the needs and possible significance of his new department to the cabinet, which, though it accepted the need for a propaganda campaign, saw it as of only secondary importance. Sir Edward Grey, as Foreign Secretary, considered that propaganda activity should remain subordinate to diplomatic negotiation. He did not want diplomacy upset or determined by the nature of the propaganda sent to countries with whom the British were negotiating. This attitude of Grey was revealed in 1915 in relation to Bulgaria. Grey was aware of the need to obtain Balkan unity against Germany and since the beginning of the war, Wellington House had been sending literature to Bulgaria, and cable and wireless messages via Petrograd.² As the needs became more pressing, a conference was called on 26 July at the Foreign Office to consider the stepping up of the campaign, concentrating particularly on a stream of material directed to Bulgaria and the Bulgarian issue alone.³ A memorandum was prepared by Schuster at Wellington House, in which it was proposed that a variety of pamphlet material be sent discussing the major diplomatic issues affecting Bulgaria.⁴ But the Foreign Office was not sympathetic to these proposals. It was felt that immediate diplomacy was necessary and that pamphlet material would take too long to prepare and issue. Still more important than this, Grey and other leading officials, considered that delicate diplomatic issues could not be dealt with in the form of pamphlets, but that they were the sole concern of the

1. see above, pp.154-155.

2. Masterman always showed a close interest in Bulgaria and believed that had he stayed in the cabinet, Bulgaria would have had a hearing and might have stayed neutral - see Lucy Masterman, p.269.

3. minutes of the conference, 26 July 1915, F.O.371/2555, P.R.O.

4. 28 July 1915, F.O. 371/2555, P.R.O. - the proposals concerned the Straits and Constantinople, Kavala, Macedonia and Thrace.

diplomat. Lord Robert Cecil commented:

The Bulgarians will not be swayed by academic discussions of what may or may not be the attitude of the Allies but will only be determined to action by a firm offer on the part of the Entente Powers, giving them a guarantee that their aspirations will be realised. ¹

Though the Foreign Office, in this instance, were probably correct in their assessment of the need for haste in making concrete offers, the principle of steering propaganda away from what might be considered diplomatic issues was deemed to be appropriate for all cases, and Wellington House readily acquiesced in this subordinate role.

The creative role of the propagandist was further limited in another respect: 'During the first two years of the war the British Government under Asquith were unwilling to formulate any war aims other than the defeat of Germany and the restoration of Belgium.'² This attitude inevitably curtailed the scope of action of propaganda. Nor was Lloyd George any more eager to specify war aims, and when he did it was the result more of outside pressure than inner conviction.³ Nevertheless, his statement of British war aims at a conference of trade union leaders on 5 January 1918 'was the fullest... made in the course of the war'.⁴ It enabled the Ministry of Information to play a much more positive role where foreign policy was concerned and the propagandists of 1918 continued to press for firm commitments on diplomatic issues.⁵

Masterman, once he had resigned from the cabinet, did not consider himself to be in a position where he could put pressure on either the Cabinet or the Foreign Office. Neither of the latter gave great consideration to the formulation of war aims and did not consider propaganda to be of sufficient importance to warrant their doing so. Masterman's acceptance

-
1. minute on Wellington House memorandum, 29 July 1915, F.O. 371/2555, P.R.O.
 2. V.H. Rothwell, British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy 1914-18, (Oxford, 1971), p.2.
 3. A.J.P. Taylor, English History 1914-1945 (London, 1965) pp.79-80.
 4. A.J.P. Taylor, p.97.
 5. See above, p.145 and footnote 1.

of the secondary role of propaganda is revealed in his communications with Grey. In 1915 Masterman wrote:

... If, however, I give you now an interim report, it is absurd to suppose that you can find time to read it, and if I send it through you to the Cabinet, I do not suppose a single member of the Cabinet will read it either. On the other hand, we are spending a good deal of public money and I suppose we must make some record of it for some future time, if not now, at the ending of the war. 1

The passage of time revealed no increase of interest. In February 1916, following the production of the Second Report of Wellington House, Masterman wrote again to Grey concerning the circulation of the report amongst the Cabinet:

Above all it would save the continual enquiries by some of them on account of the importunity of their friends who say that 'something ought to be done'. Thus Curzon sends me a long letter from Cromer making the suggestion that we 'should translate and distribute some of the best books and pamphlets written for the Allied cause.' As we had already translated and distributed over seven million of them, the suggestion, though brilliant, was belated. 2

Grey had little comfort to offer:

We are also continually receiving suggestions for all kinds of propaganda work which you and the News Department here have been steadily undertaking since the war began. I trust that your report may put a stop to these but I fear that this is a somewhat sanguine view. 3

Grey, it would seem, was unable to inform the cabinet what the situation was. By September 1916, Masterman had even given up where Grey was concerned. When he sent Grey the third report from Wellington House, he expressed the hope that he would understand that the bulky document was not for him to read. Grey readily replied, 'I only wish I could read it, as I feel sure it would be most interesting, but as it is I am afraid I must take advantage of the dispensation which you offer me.'⁴ From the attitudes expressed above and from

-
1. Masterman to Grey, 22 Mar. 1915, Grey papers, F.O. 800/109, P.R.O.
 2. Masterman to Grey, 12 Feb. 1916, Grey papers, F.O. 800/109
 3. Grey to Masterman, 16 Feb. 1916, Grey papers, F.O. 800/109, P.R.O.
 4. Grey to Masterman, 20 Sept. 1916, F.O. 395/2833.

an examination of the cabinet minutes, it is clear that no profound analysis of the concept of propaganda was ever made at government level. Moreover, though it may have been discussed at Wellington House, no written work on the theory behind propaganda was ever produced either by Wellington House or by the Foreign Office. If it had, it would have been pioneering work.

The assumption at the Foreign Office and elsewhere, perhaps even with Masterman himself, was that as best propaganda could only play a subsidiary role, because it was dependent upon events. Robert Cecil, at one time in charge of propaganda in 1916, and who expressed the belief that propaganda was the chief work of the Foreign Office,¹ nevertheless avowed:

I have the greatest disbelief in the power of propaganda and always have had. I daresay you know the old story about Frank Lockwood - he said to a client, pondering and grieving over a legal defeat, 'The truth is my dear friend we should have done better if the facts had been a little different.' - and as long as the military situation is at any rate superficially, unfavourable to the Entente, it will be difficult to construct out of it effective propaganda. 2

Spring-Rice replied: 'I agree with you as to propaganda. I do not think much can be gained by it. The real propaganda is facts and results.'³

The most consistent interest in propaganda was demonstrated by Lloyd George who first raised the matter in 1914 and upon whose initiative the Ministry of Information was ultimately created. The Lloyd George papers do not reveal any dominant interest in the subject of propaganda, but they do reveal that he had a healthy respect for the power of the press and for the value of good and effective publicity. He always considered propaganda to be a necessary function of government and believed it should be carried out with maximum efficiency. His appointment of Beaverbrook reflected this desire and he pushed through his appointments of the 'press-gang' in the face

1. Cecil to Simon, 22 Dec. 1915, F.O. 371/2579

2. Cecil to Spring-Rice, 12 May 1916, Spring-Rice papers, F.O. 800/242.

3. Spring-Rice to Cecil, 2 June 1916, Spring-Rice papers, F.O. 800/242, F.R.O.

of considerable adverse criticism.¹ He defended these appointments to C.P. Scott:

on the ground of Buchan's ineffectiveness and the difficulty of finding competent men for the job! Beaverbrook was extremely clever and though he was described as a 'shady financier' he was not aware of any real foundation for the charge. 2

Beaverbrook's reputation as a propagandist was already established.³ However, with respect to other appointments of journalists to positions of importance within the Ministry of Information, or in the case of Northcliffe, to the separate Enemy Propaganda Department (known as the British War Mission), Lloyd George's first interest was less with propaganda than with occupying such men as Northcliffe, Donald and Rothermere with government business which would reduce the likelihood of their maintaining their campaigns of constant criticism of government actions. As Lloyd-George told C.P. Scott:

Northcliffe had been quite reasonable during the seven months he had been in America (as head of a British propaganda mission). It was necessary to find occupation for his abounding energies if they were not to run into mischief. 4

Lord Hankey's diaries confirm this attitude of Lloyd George when, in 1917, he tried to have Northcliffe appointed to go to the U.S.A.

Interesting discussion at morning War Cabinet on subject of the articles on the submarine question in The Times and Daily Mail and all the Northcliffe press which supply most valuable propaganda to the enemy, who makes full use of it. Ll. G. very angry about it... he is now trying to persuade the War Cabinet to send Northcliffe to America to coordinate the purchases, transport arrangements etc. of the various Depts. This, of course, is really a dodge to get rid of Northcliffe, of whom he is afraid... 5

1. see above, p.59 ff.

2. T. Wilson (editor), The Political Diaries of C.P.Scott 1911-1928 (London, 1970), p.336, entry 4 Mar. 1918.

3. see above, pp.60-61.

4. T. Wilson, p.336, entry 4 Mar. 1918.

5. Stephen Roskill (editor), Hankey Vol.I 1877-1918 (London, 1970), p.390, entry 24 May 1917.

The pragmatic approach was a feature of Lloyd George's prime ministership, and he admired Beaverbrook and Northcliffe for the same attitude. Lloyd George told C.P. Scott:

Neither he (Northcliffe) nor Beaverbrook would allow their propaganda work to be determined by their personal views - and would simply take the line which they thought likely to be most useful in the particular case. ¹

C.P. Scott went on to comment, 'As this is not very far from being probably George's own state of mind it did not seem much use to argue the matter.'²

With regard to propaganda, this practical attitude was probably self-defeating. The failure to give the work of propaganda a theoretical grounding, the failure to clarify precisely the powers of the propaganda organisations as government departments and their powers vis-a-vis other departments, was in the long-run harmful to the whole propaganda effort. Beaverbrook spent more time as Minister of Information fighting against Foreign Office opposition than he did organising propaganda activity.³ Lloyd George remained aloof from the struggle, content perhaps to see the Foreign Office embarrassed but not prepared to support Beaverbrook wholeheartedly against Balfour.⁴

The quarrel between the Ministry of Information and the Foreign Office was the continuation of a series of inter-departmental disagreements involving the propaganda issue. Because of lack of definition by the government, numerous government departments claimed the right to conduct propaganda and to lay down its guiding principles. The activities of the initial propaganda organisations, particularly the War Propaganda Bureau under Masterman, were treated with disdain, especially when any right of independent decision and policy making was claimed by them. Instead of receiving full cooperation from other government departments, Masterman found his efforts

1. T. Wilson, P.336, entry 4 Mar. 1918.

2. *idem*.

3. see above, p.61 ff.

4. see above, p.74 ff.

obstructed at all levels. Both the War Office and the Admiralty controlled the flow of information relating to military and naval activities because of the need for censorship. But the intelligence branch of the War Office, M.I.7, sought to provide the information and to prepare articles based upon it, thus subordinating the propaganda department to the role of publisher. The War Office demanded the right to examine all articles published by Wellington House which were based on information from G.H.Q. before they were distributed.¹ The Foreign Office objected to articles prepared by M.I.7. on the grounds that they failed to keep to military affairs and tended to intrude upon matters which related to foreign affairs, which had nothing to do with the War Office.² The War Office had already made it difficult for the expansion of propaganda work by Wellington House, by refusing to provide facilities at the front for press correspondents and important visitors until 1916 and the middle of that year they were already proposing to reduce these facilities, which excited the following comment from Miles Lampson at the Foreign Office: 'Is it as a matter of fact possible to 'reduce' the facilities accorded by the War Office? Hardly. They have already reached what amounts to an irreducible minimum.'³ The War Office were also slow to grant permission for photographs and cinematic films to be taken at the front. They did not agree until the autumn of 1915, though Wellington House had raised the matter soon after war broke out.⁴ It was not surprising that the Germans were ahead of the British in employing such methods. Both the War Office and the Admiralty were believed to have held back part of the intelligence information they collated, first from Wellington House and later from the Intelligence Branch of the Department of Information, whose head, Lord Gleichen, brought the charge.⁵ Ironically, both the Admiralty and the War Office were constant critics of propaganda arrangements throughout the war. Their proposals for reorganisation in December 1915 brought bitter reaction from

1. G.H.Q. to the Foreign Office, 16 Aug. 1916, F.O. 395/46, P.R.O.

2. Foreign Office minutes, 5 Oct. 1916, F.O. 395/46, P.R.O.

3. minute, 2 June 1916, F.O. 395/39, P.R.O.

4. memorandum by A.E. Gowers of Wellington House, 29 May 1916, F.O. 395/37, P.R.O.

5. see above, p.64 and footnote 1.

Wellington House, where Schuster commented that it was 'sickening' that 'after pursuing a policy of deliberate obstruction for about seventeen months, the War Office and Admiralty should be complaining and putting forward these proposals'.¹ Wellington House even found itself in conflict with the Press Bureau over the use as propaganda of cigarette cards.² However, Wellington House had little trouble with the Foreign Office because it worked closely with it, before the reorganisation of 1916 when Wellington House came officially under Foreign Office direction.

Beaverbrook simply inherited all this interdepartmental squabbling when he became head of the new ministry, and he faced consistent opposition from the War Office and Admiralty over similar issues to those which had divided these departments and Wellington House in the past. But, much more seriously, Beaverbrook also had to face bitter opposition from the Foreign Office³, which saw the new ministry as a threat to its position as the maker of foreign policy. In reality, they had already lost this function to the War Cabinet, but they hoped that their authority would be restored at the end of the war, and so held on to the claim that the Foreign Office was best equipped to control propaganda. Beaverbrook sought hard to have the role of his ministry clearly defined and its powers firmly established, but he failed against entrenched opposition. His struggle was merely the continuation of a fight that had taken place ever since war began. The scenes behind the total war effort were filled with the most remarkable petty arguments between major governmental departments over what was, after all, only considered to be a secondary part of the war effort. It was perhaps a sign of the degree to which, during the war, power had increasingly become concentrated in the hands of the few. There were only the crumbs left over which to quarrel.

The coming of the armistice made the end of the Ministry of Information inevitable. As with many new ministries set up during the war, it had not been envisaged that it would last

1. Schuster to Montgomery, 13 Dec. 1915, F.O. 371/2579.

2. see above, p.104 ff.

3. see above, p.61 ff.

beyond it. Moreover, its chequered history, with the controversies that had surrounded the organisation of propaganda, the public condemnation of atrocity propaganda and the lack of importance attached to propaganda by leading politicians during the war meant that there were few people prepared to argue for the retention of a separate Ministry of Information. The Foreign Office had the last word in the quarrel between itself and the Ministry, when it absorbed the remains of the ministry within its own News Department, retaining the Nationals section, the cables and wireless section, and the library, but ceasing activity related to publications, photographs and the cinema, and the facilities which had been provided for visitors and correspondents.

The Foreign Office now no longer faced the prospect which had alarmed it so much, of there being two separate ministries pursuing independent foreign policies. The News Department would work in close harmony with other departments of the Foreign Office as it had done in the past. Nevertheless, the new head of the News Department, Sir Henry Newbolt, took his position very seriously, as is revealed in a memorandum he prepared following conversations with Sir William Tyrell and Lord Balfour. Newbolt had informed Balfour that the Foreign Office had taken over the work of the Ministry of Information on 1 December 1918 and he had in turn been assured by Tyrell that:

the matter was regarded by the Foreign Office in the most serious light, as a necessary measure for putting into effect a decision of the War Cabinet and... the most positive assurance as to both the permanence and importance of the post which I had undertaken to accept. 1

Newbolt was strongly supported by H.A.L. Fisher, Lord Balfour and Lord Crewe, who had all been fellow members of the Entente Committee, set up in October 1916 to advise upon relationships with the allies. They were all agreed that:

the diplomatic and secret methods of the Foreign Office should be supplemented by a system of more personal

and public intercourse between nations and by the establishment of some working machinery for ensuring a community of ideals, especially in the sphere of education. 1

H.A.L. Fisher was especially keen on the idea of educational exchange as a means of keeping communication channels permanently open. He recognised that the old laissez-faire attitudes that had existed prior to the war in the matter of propaganda were no longer applicable. A number of Foreign Office representatives who had taken an active role in propaganda during the war, also stressed the need for a positive approach towards propaganda policy, amongst them S.A. Guest: 'One of the chief lessons to be drawn from the experience of the war and the events leading up to it, is that diplomacy is not enough for the maintenance of satisfactory international relations.'² Guest distinguished two types of propaganda: what he called publicity propaganda which consisted of pamphlets, films, photo's, the press, etc.; and auxiliary diplomacy whereby one retained the framework of organisation and concentrated on general methods to establish contact, such as visits, educational exchanges, books, etc.

At a conference in March 1919 these ideas were taken into account by the Foreign Office when the future of British propaganda abroad was under discussion. What they could do, of course, was greatly limited by the amount of money available by the Treasury. Most publications ceased, particularly those illustrated magazines which had survived the purge of the Ministry of Information in 1918. The Treasury refused to subsidise such papers as Hesperia, Senji Gaho, and Cheng Pao, the last mentioned being continued on a private commercial basis. The only exception was Al Hakitat, which was continued for several years after the war.³ Foreign Office representatives abroad were warned by the Foreign Office at the beginning of 1919 that they would have to reduce the scale of their propaganda activities to a level well below that of wartime owing to a

1. memorandum by Sir Henry Newbolt, 17 Jan. 1919, F.O. 395/300.

2. report to the Foreign Office, from S.A. Guest in Paris, 16 Jan. 1919, F.O. 395/301, P.R.O.

3. file on illustrated newspapers, F.O. 395/298, P.R.O.

contraction of funds and that still further cuts were probable after the conclusion of the Peace Treaty. The Treasury were insistent that drastic reductions in staff working on propaganda both at home and abroad should be made. It was felt that the cost of propaganda during the war, estimated at £1,800,000 for the year 1917, and amounting to approximately £5,000,000 for the whole war, had been excessive, and more important, insufficiently under Treasury control, though the money for propaganda had come from the annual Vote of Credit.¹ In 1919 the Treasury did not stipulate how much they were going to spend but only that there was to be a drastic reduction. In the light of these attitudes, the News Department reacted somewhat sceptically to the various proposals put before them for the continuation of propaganda on a large scale. But in principle, the idea of propaganda was accepted as being a regular feature of Foreign Office work and it resulted in the positive step being taken of establishing press attaches in some of the major embassies to study the local press and to ensure that the views of the British government received adequate publicity. The Foreign Office also gave support to such institutions as the British Council which did considerable work in promoting relations with countries abroad and which used methods similar to those established by Rennell Rodd in Italy, where various British institutes had been set up in the major cities during the war. But probably the most significant decision taken by the conference of March 1919 was that British diplomatic representatives ought to be instructed that propaganda was part of the regular work of their missions.² In May 1919 instructions were circulated in the name of the Foreign Secretary, Curzon, to all of His Majesty's Representatives:

It is the intention of His Majesty's Government that the work of British Propaganda shall on no account be permitted to cease, though it must, necessarily, be conducted on a reduced scale, from consideration of economy, and in some cases, will gradually assume a commercial rather than a political aspect.

It is proposed that British propaganda in foreign countries shall, in future, be regarded as part of

1. 6th report Select Committee of National Expenditure, Reports from Committees Vol II, 1918.
 2. report on conference, F.O. 395/297, P.R.O.

the regular work of His Majesty's Missions abroad.

... British interest would be ill-served by a blatant publicity... On the other hand a complete and contemptuous silence, however gratifying to our self-respect, is no longer a profitable policy in our times when advertisement - whether of past achievements or future aims - is, perhaps unfortunately, almost a universal practice of nations as individuals. 1

This circular revealed the impact propaganda had had: clearly propaganda was accepted as being a necessary function of the Foreign Office, but this necessity was obviously accepted with reluctance as being an evil that could not be avoided. Propaganda was still something to be despised. The connotation of the word remained indicative of moral condemnation.

The work of the propagandists was discredited after the war because of the abundance of atrocity propaganda during it. Ironically, the official propagandists were responsible for very little of it. In Falsehood in War-Time (London, 1928), Arthur Ponsonby condemned the lies manufactured during the First World War and listed a number of those which had been current during the war and which had proved to be false.² Hardly any of these originated with or were exploited by official propaganda organisations. They were usually press rumours built up for crude and sensational publicity and it is noticeable that most of Ponsonby's quotations came from newspaper sources. Only in two cases that he mentions, the Lusitania medal and the 'Kadaver' episode, were official propagandists directly involved. In the case of the former, the medal was genuine, though the facts relating to its production were somewhat distorted.³ However, there is no evidence to suggest the distortion was premeditated. It is quite possible to argue that the propagandists simply missed the original point of the medal. The only time official propagandists made a serious error was in the case of the 'Kadaver episode'⁴ when a doubtful story was exploited for sensations' sake. But this was a departure from normal practice. Admittedly the Bryce report was an official

1. Foreign Office circular, F.O. 395/304.

2. such stories included the mutilated nurse, and the crucified Canadian soldier

3. see above, p.135 ff.

4. see above, p.137 ff.

propaganda document, but it was never conceived of as a complete fabrication and few of the events referred to in the report were of the nature of mutilation stories, or the bayonetting of babies type. The fault of the Bryce report was perhaps that it included too much hearsay evidence, but Belgium was an emotional issue from the beginning so far as the British were concerned and Wellington House acted only as a middleman where the report was concerned. The attitude of the propaganda organisations to the question of Belgian atrocities is reflected in their reply to a strange request that came from the British Consul-General in Barcelona in January 1915 that mutilated and maimed children be sent to various religious schools in Spain to be brought up there and to serve as a living reminder of German evil. The Foreign Office considered the idea foolish and Montgomery commented: 'Where are we to find maimed children? I believe they are non-existent.'¹ The official propagandists strove hard to keep to the truth, though inevitably through the selection of facts they could not avoid national prejudice and bias.

Nevertheless, the sensational unofficial propaganda of the press brought discredit on all other forms of publicity. Nobody sought to defend propaganda after the war or tried to justify its use. It had no historian. The critics of propaganda had it all their own way, therefore, and no fair assessment was ever made. But is such an assessment even possible? 'Much of what is written about the effectiveness of specific propaganda campaigns must be regarded as pure conjecture.'² Only in a totalitarian regime where the government controls all the communication media and the education of the young, can one determine with any confidence the influence of propaganda. But in a democracy where the media are free from state control, it is very difficult to trace the influence of ideas and opinions, especially those spread by the government. But if it is difficult to measure the effect of government propaganda on domestic opinion, it is still more difficult to trace its effect on foreign opinion. It would be impossible to argue that propaganda altered the

1. minute, 25 Jan. 1915, F.O. 371/2555.

2. T.H. Qualter, *The Nature of Propaganda and its Function in Democratic Government*, Ph.D. thesis, London, 1956, p.34.

course of the war in any way as there is no evidence to suggest this. But if any conclusion may be drawn, it is a commonsense one that ideas cannot work in a vacuum:

propaganda is successful only when directed at those who are willing to listen, absorb the information, and if possible act on it, and this happens only when the other side is in a condition of lowered morale and is already losing the campaign. 1

This refers particularly to propaganda directed against the enemy, but it also applies to propaganda in neutral and allied countries: it can only be effective if the people in question are receptive and circumstances are favourable to the spread of the ideas that the propagandist wishes to promote. Propaganda can affect attitudes but rarely alter behaviour.

The propagandists of the First World War may be deemed successful because, on a commonsense basis, they recognised this. They did not control their native press, let alone that of the countries to which their propaganda was directed and in such a context, any propaganda which involved complete fabrication was pointless, risking exposure not only abroad, but also in the British press which would simply have meant providing the enemy with excellent counter-propaganda opportunities. Against the background of failure during the first three years of the war, any kind of aggressive propaganda campaign in allied, neutral or enemy countries would have been singularly inappropriate. There was little to boast about, and no point in inventing success. Propagandists could only capitalise on the errors of the enemy. Counter-propaganda was the order of the day, and caution when approaching neutral opinion. This new attitude was exemplified in the subtle and discreet campaign of the early years of the war. The early propagandists were successful because they did not upset the Americans and other neutrals in the way that the Germans did. They were also successful in the more positive sense that they exploited German military and diplomatic errors to the full, while managing to play down the more questionable aspects of British policy. Only in the final year of the war did a

1. J.A.C. Brown, Techniques of Persuasion (Penguin, 1963), p.102.

change in tactics become relevant. The alteration in the circumstances of the war made aggressive and open propaganda feasible. Beaverbrook could afford to abandon the cautious approach to neutral opinion, while Northcliffe was able to launch an onslaught upon enemy opinion, in order to exploit the lowered morale of the armies of Austria-Hungary and of the people of Germany. But because their campaigns in 1918 were appropriate, does not invalidate the approach of their predecessors. As Beaverbrook recognised, the achievements of 1918 were based on the success of earlier years:

When Lord Beaverbrook took over the new Ministry of Information he succeeded to much wider powers, but he was building on a foundation which had already been established... We welcome Ludendorff's praise of the propagandists of 1916 and 1917, the unacknowledged men who started the most potent war organisation that the British Empire has ever seen. 1

His final claim may be exaggerated, but his words do underline an important truth, that a true appreciation of the achievements of British propaganda during the First World War is impossible without a detailed analysis of the work carried out in the earlier years, and full recognition of the organisation which began it all, the War Propaganda Bureau of Wellington House.

1. quoted in Lucy Masterman, p.300.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Primary Material

A. Unpublished

Public Record Office

Foreign Office - F.O. 371 (Political Correspondence)
papers Nos. 1878-2852 - 1914 1878-2221
1915 2222-2592
1916 2593-2852

F.O. 395 (News)
Nos. 1-311 - 1916 1-63
1917 64-161
1918 162-265
1919 266-311

Private papers - F.O. 800
Nos. 199-217 Balfour, A.J.
331-335 Bryce, Lord
195-113 Grey, Sir Edward
(selected volumes)
209 Northcliffe, Lord
241-242 Spring-Rice, Cecil
221 Sykes, Mark

Cabinet papers - Cab. 23 War Cabinet papers, Dec. 1916-
Oct. 1919
Nos. 1-12

Cab. 24 - G papers - printed papers
circulated to War Cabinet, Cabinet,
War Council, Dardenelles Committee,
and War Committee Jan. 1915-Feb. 1920

also - Cab. 37/129/11
Cab. 41/35/38

Central Office - Inf. 4 - War of 1914-18 Information
of Information Services.

Beaverbrook Library

Beaverbrook Papers - F series
(by kind permission
of the Librarian
A.J.P. Taylor)

Bonar Law papers - selected volumes from various
series.

Lloyd George papers - C, D, E, F, series

There were no private papers left by C.F.G. Masterman (though

I was able to talk to his widow), and all the papers of the propaganda organisations, from Wellington House to the Ministry of Information were destroyed in 1920. Thus one is forced to rely on the Foreign Office papers, particularly the correspondence, since Wellington House worked closely with the Foreign Office and eventually the Foreign Office ran propaganda until the creation of the Department of Information and following this the Ministry of Information. Thus I consulted F.O. 371 for the years 1914-16. There is a comprehensive index system of these papers for the years 1906-1919, but as there were so many varied references which related to propaganda, I found it necessary to work steadily through all the volumes for 1915 and 1916, though I was able to be selective for the year 1914, as I had only the last part of the year to take into account. In 1916 when the Foreign Office was given overall direction of propaganda, the correspondence relating to propaganda all went through the Foreign Office News Department, and this material was filed separately under FO 395 from 1916 to the end of the war. This provided a rich and concentrated source of information.

Private papers had only a few references to propaganda, but were useful, and the lack of thought given to propaganda was in itself a revealing point. I was unable to consult the Buchan papers which are in Canada, but his biographer, Janet Adam Smith, kindly made available her own notes and material that she had in photostat. I also communicated with another research student in this field who was able to indicate to me that the Carson papers in Northern Ireland, and the Asquith papers at the Bodleian were unrewarding in relation to the topic of propaganda. The Lloyd George papers and other material in the Beaverbrook Library were mostly useful for the last year of the war when the Ministry of Information was created, and were particularly useful on the struggle that developed between the new Ministry and the Foreign Office.

The papers on the information services of 1914-18, though not vast in quantity, were a particularly valuable source of

information and contain a great variety of interesting papers. These included the reports of Wellington House (there is a copy of the 1st report in the Imperial War Museum, copies of all three reports in the Foreign Office Library and also in the F.O. 371 papers). These papers were brought together as the result of official enquiries regarding the history of propaganda and the history of the Ministry of Information and its function, at the beginning of the Second World War. The papers were accumulated from various sources but relate mainly to the enquiries conducted by Sir Robert Donald, then editor of the Daily Chronicle, into the methods employed by various departments in distributing propaganda to neutral and allied countries during the First World War (deposited by his biographer, H.A. Taylor).

B. Published

i) Official documents

House of Commons Debates (Hansard's Parliamentary Debates)
Fifth series, 1913-21.

6th Report of Select Committee on National Expenditure
from Reports from Committees, Vol. II, 1918.

Gooch, G.P., and Temperley, H.W., British Documents on the Origin of the War 1898-1914 (London, 1927).

Mitchell, Peter Chalmers, Report on the Propaganda Library, 3 vols. (London, 1917).

Temperley, H.W. and Penson, L.M., Diplomatic Blue Books 1814-1914 (Cambridge, 1938).

ii) Pamphlets

Over one thousand pamphlets were printed and published by official British propaganda organisations during the First World War. There are a number of these in the British Museum, but the best collection is to be found at the Imperial War Museum. They are not catalogued separately here and can only be traced under the names of individual authors, so tracing them presents a lot of problems. As I could not read all the pamphlets, I had to be selective. The selection was based on two main principles: the first was year and subject & I

selected pamphlets on each of the main topics of the war, e.g. Belgium, the blockade, atrocities, etc., and selected several on the same topic but from different years in order to be able to compare the development of theme and in order to trace whether there had been any change; the second principle was the author, as I selected pamphlets by people who were prominent members of the propaganda organisations, e.g. L.B. Namier, J.W. Headlam, A. Toynbee and others, and I also selected pamphlets by people who were famous writers at the time, e.g. A. Conan Doyle, G.K. Chesterton, and others. I also consulted speeches, documents, etc., issued under the names of leading political figures. The pamphlets consulted are listed below:

Andler, C.H.	<u>Pan-Germanism</u> (Paris, 1915)
Archer, William	<u>The Thirteen Days</u> (London, 1915)
"	<u>Colour Blind Neutrality</u> (London, 1916)
"	<u>501 Gems of German Thought</u> (London, 1917)
Balfour, A.J.	<u>The Navy and the War</u> (London, 1915)
"	<u>The Freedom of the Seas</u> (London, 1915)
Barker, Ernest	<u>Ireland in the last 50 Years</u> (London, 1916)
Beaverbrook, Lord (under Aitken, Sir Max)	<u>Canada in Flanders, Vol.I</u> (London, 1916)
"	<u>Canada in Flanders, Vol.II</u> (London, 1917)
Beck, J.M.	<u>The Case of Edith Cavell</u> (London, undated)
Bedier, T.	<u>German Atrocities from German Evidence</u> (London, 1915)
Benson, E.F.	<u>Crescent and Iron Cross</u> (London, 1918)
Bevan, Edwyn	<u>The Pan-German Programme</u> (London, undated)
"	<u>Germany's Future</u> (London, 1918)
Borsa, Mario	<u>England and her Critics</u> (London, 1917)
Bryce, Lord	<u>Report of the Committee on Alleged German Outrages</u> (London, 1915)
"	<u>The Last Phase in Belgium</u> (London, 1916)
"	<u>The Attitude of Great Britain in the Present War</u> (London, 1916)
Buchan, John	<u>Battle of the Somme</u> (London, 1916)
Cammaerts, Emile	<u>Through the Iron Bars</u> (London, 1917)
Carter, Henry	<u>The Control of the Drink Trade</u> (London, 1918)
Cecil, Lord Robert	<u>Black List and Blockade</u> (London, 1918)

Chesterton, G.K.	<u>Letters to an Old Garibaldian</u> (London, 1914)
Cleary, Rev.	<u>Prussian Militarism at Work</u> (London, 1917)
Cook, Sir Edward T.	<u>Britain and Turkey - the cause of the Rupture</u> (London, 1914)
Corbett, Sir Julian	<u>The League of Peace and a Free State</u> (London, 1917)
Crookes, Will	<u>The British Workmen Defends his Home</u> (London, 1917)
Davies, E.F.	<u>British and German Finance</u> (London, 1915)
Davignon, Henri	<u>Belgium and Germany</u> (London, 1915)
Destrees, Jules	<u>The Deportation of Belgian Workmen</u> (London, 1917)
"	<u>To the Italian Armies</u> (London, 1917)
Donald, Robert	<u>Trade Control in War</u> (London, 1916)
Boyle, Arthur Conan	<u>To Arms</u> (London, 1914)
"	<u>The Outlook on the War</u> (London, 1915)
"	<u>A Visit to Three Fronts</u> (London, 1916)
El-Ghuseim, Faiz	<u>Martyred Armenia</u> (London, 1917)
Fisher, H.A.L.	<u>The British Share in the War</u> (London, undated)
Galacino, Alvaro	<u>The Truth about the War</u> , (London, 1915)
George, David Lloyd	<u>British War Aims</u> (London, 1918)
Goschen, Sir Edward	<u>The One Condition of Peace</u> (London, 1916)
Gosling, H.	<u>Peace: How to get and keep it</u> (London, 1916)
Gray, Alexander	<u>The True Pastime</u> (London, 1915)
"	<u>The New Leviathan</u> (London, 1915)
Grey, Viscount	<u>Great Britain's Measures against German Trade</u> (London, 1916)
"	<u>The League of Nations</u> (London, 1918)
Grondys, L.H.	<u>The Germans in Belgium</u> (London, 1915)
Gwatkins, H.M.	<u>Britain's Case against Germany</u> (London, 1917)
Headlam, J.W.	<u>England, Germany and Europe</u> (London, 1914)
"	<u>The Starvation of Germany</u> (London, 1917)
"	<u>Belgium and Greece</u> (London, 1917)
"	<u>The Dead Lands of Europe</u> (London, 1917)
Higgins, A. Pearce	<u>Armed Merchant Ships</u> (London, 1914)
"	<u>Defensively Armed Merchant Ships and Submarine Warfare</u> (London, 1917)
Hope, Anthony	<u>The New (German) Testament</u> (London, 1914)
"	<u>Militarism, German and British</u> (London, 1915)
Hurd, A.	<u>Outlawry at Sea</u> (London, 1915)

- Hurd, A. Defence of the British Empire (London, 1915)
 " Murder at Sea (London, 1916)
 " Submarines and Zeppelins (London, 1916)
 " New Prospects in 1917 (London, 1917)
 Kerr, P. What the Irish Regiments Have Done
 (London, 1916)
 Law, Hugh A. Why is Ireland at War? (London, 1916)
 Lichnovsky, Prince My Mission to London (London, 1918)
 Loti, P. The Trail of the Barbarians (London, 1917)
 Low, A. Maurice The Law of the Blockade (London, 1916)
 MacDonagh, M. The Irish at the Front (London, 1916)
 " The Irish at the Somme (London, 1917)
 MacLean, F. Germany's Colonial Failure (London, 1918)
 Masaryk, T.G. Austrian Terrorism in Bohemia (London, 1918)
 Massart, Jean Belgians under the German Eagle (London,
 1916)
 Massingham, H.W. Why we came to help Belgium (London, 1914)
 Masterman, C.F.G. The Triumph of the Fleet (London, 1915)
 Mears, E.G. The Destruction of Belgium (London, 1916)
 Murray, Gilbert The Foreign Policy of Sir Edward Grey
1906-15 (Oxford, 1915)
 " Ethical Problems of the War (London, 1915)
 " Faith, War and Policy (London, 1918)
 " The League of Nations and the Democratic
Idea (London, 1918)
 Namier, L.B. Danzig: Poland's outlet to the Sea (London,
 1917)
 " Germany and Eastern Europe (London, 1915)
 Newbolt, Henry A Note on the History of Submarine War
 (London, 1918)
 Nippold, O. The Awakening of the German People
 (London, 1918)
 Parker, Sir Gilbert Is England Apathetic? (London, 1915)
 " What is the Matter with England? (London
 1915)
 Passelecq, Fernand Truth and Travesty (London, 1916)
 Prince, Morton The Psychology of the Kaiser (London, 1915)
 Prothero, G.W. A Lasting Peace (London, 1917)
 Reade, Arthur Russia under Nicholas II (London, 1917)
 Redmond, John Mr. Redmond's Visit to the Front (London,
 1915)
 " Ireland and the War (London, 1915)
 " The Voice of Ireland (London, 1916)

Roberts, Maj. Charles D.	<u>Canada in Flanders, Vol. III</u> (London, 1918)
Rolleston, T.W.	<u>Ireland and Poland</u> (London, 1917)
Rose, J.Holland	<u>Why we carry on</u> (London, 1918)
Rosemeier, Dr. Herman	<u>A German to Germans</u> (London, 1917)
Seddon, J.A.	<u>Why British Labour Supports the War</u> (London, 1917)
Sloss, R.	<u>Some Facts about India</u> (London, 1917)
Tillett, Ben	<u>Who is Responsible for the War</u> (London, 1917)
Torras, Valentin	<u>Spanish Prisoner in a German Camp</u> (London, 1917)
Toynbee, A.J.	<u>Murderous Tyranny of the Turks</u> (London, 1917)
Trevelyan, G.	<u>The Servians and Austria</u> , (London, 1915)
Wallace, Sir D.M.	<u>Our Russian Ally</u> (London, 1914)
Wedgewood, Lt.Com. Josiah	<u>With Machine-Guns in Gallipoli</u> (London, 1915)
Weiss, Andre	<u>The Violation by Germany of the Neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg</u> (Paris, 1915)
Weston, F.	<u>The Black Slaves of Prussia</u> (London, 1918)
White, J.William	<u>America's Arraignment of Germany</u> (London, 1915)
Whitlock, Brand	<u>The Deportation</u> (London, 1917)
Willson, Beckles	<u>In the Ypres Salient</u> (London, 1918)

Miscellaneous

<u>Blood and Brass - Glimpses of German Psychology</u> (extracts from German speeches) (London, 1917)
<u>British Civilian Prisoners in German East Africa</u> (Rumanian Official Documents) (London, 1918)
<u>British Universities in the War</u> (London, 1917)
<u>'A Corpse Conversion Factory'</u> (London, 1917)
<u>The Death of Edith Cavell</u> (London, 1915)
<u>The Deportation of Women and Girls from Lille</u> (French official documents) (no details)
<u>Disclosures of a German Staff Officer</u> (London, 1918)
<u>England, Germany and Irish Question</u> , (London, 1917) by an English Catholic)
<u>Microbe Culture at Bucharest</u> (London, 1917)
<u>Russia and her Allies</u> (London, 1917)

iii) Speeches, diaries, memoirs, etc.

- Ashton, Major General 'An aspect of British Official Wartime
Sir George Propaganda', Cornhill Magazine, Vol.
XLVIII, 1931, pp. 223-241.
- Beaverbrook, Lord Politicians and the War, 1914-1916
(London, 1928).
- " Men and Power 1917-1918 (London, 1956).
- Buchanan, Sir George My Mission to Russia and Other Diplomatic
Memories, 2 vols. (London, 1923)
- Charteris, Brigadier At G.H.Q. (London, 1923)
General
- Cockerill, Sir What Fools We Were (London, 1944)
George
- Cook, Sir Edward The Press in War Time with some account of
the Official Press Bureau (London, 1920)
- Gaunt, Sir Guy The Yield of the Years (London, 1940)
- Gregory, J.D. On the Edge of Diplomacy. Rambles and
Reflections 1902-1928 (London, 1925)
- Grey of Falloden, Twenty-Five Years 1892-1916, 2 vols.
Viscount (London, 1925)
- " Speeches on Foreign Affairs 1904-14
(London, 1931)
- Jones, Kennedy Fleet Street and Downing Street (London,
1919)
- Jones, Sir Roderick A Life in Reuters (London, 1951)
- Lagh, Thomas Retrospection (London, 1929)
Wodehouse (Lord
Newton)
- Lloyd George, D. War Memoirs (London, 1933-36)
- Nicholson, I. 'An aspect of British Official Wartime
Propaganda', Cornhill Magazine, Vol. LXX,
1931, pp. 593-606
- Parker, Sir Gilbert 'The United States and The War', Harpers'
Monthly Magazine, March 1918
- Rodd, Sir Rennell Social and Diplomatic Memories. 3rd series,
1902-1919 (London, 1925)
- Spender, J.A. The Public Life, Vol I (London, 1925)
- Steed, H. Wickham Through Thirty Years, Vol II (London, 1924)
- Street, Major C.J.C. 'Propaganda Behind the Lines', Cornhill
Magazine, Vol. XLVII, 1919, pp. 490-495

Stuart, Sir Campbell Secrets of Crewe House (London, 1920)

Wilson, T. (ed.) The Political Diaries of C.P. Scott 1911-1928 (London, 1970)

II. Secondary Material

A. Unpublished

Jones, R.A. The Administration of the British Diplomatic Service and the Foreign Office 1848-1906, Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of London, 1968.

Qualter, T.H. The Nature of Propaganda and its Function in Democratic Government: An Examination of the Principal Themes of Propaganda since 1880, Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of London, 1956.

B. Published

Albig, W. Public Opinion (London, 1939)

Aspinell, A. Politics and the Press c.1780-1850 (London, 1949)

Bishop, S. The Administration of British Foreign Policy (Syracuse, N.Y., 1961)

Brown, J.A.C. Techniques of Persuasion (Penguin, 1963)

Bruntz, George G. Allied Propaganda and the Collapse of the German Empire in 1918 (Palo Alto, 1938)

Carr, E.H. Propaganda in International Politics (Oxford, 1939)

Clark, Sir Fife, The Central Office of Information (London, 1970)

Collins, Doreen Aspects of British Polititits (London, 1935)

Colvin, I.D. and Marjoribanks, E. Life of Lord Carson, 3 vols. (London, 1932-36)

Deerle, N.B. A Dictionary of War Time Organisations (Oxford, 1924)

Demartial, Georges La Guerre de 1914: Comment on Mobilisa les consciences (Paris, 1922)

Dictionary of National Biography

Doob, L.W. Public Opinion and Propaganda (New York, 1948)

Duff, Charles Six Days to Shake an Empire (London, 1966)

- Dugdale, B. Arthur James Balfour, 2 vols. (London, 1936)
- Ferguson, J.H. American Diplomacy and the Boer War (Philadelphia, 1939)
- Fowler, W.B. British American Relations 1917-1918: The Role of Sir William Wiseman (Princeton, N.J., 1969)
- Fraser, Lindley Propaganda (London, 1957)
- Gleason, John Howes The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain: A Study of the Interaction of Policy and Opinion (Cambridge, Mass., 1950)
- Gosse, F. The Management of British Foreign Policy before the First World War (London, 1948)
- Gwatkin, F.T. Ashton- The British Foreign Service (Syracuse, N.Y., 1950)
- Hale, Oron James Publicity and Diplomacy with special reference to England and Germany 1890-1914 (Virginia, 1940)
- Hazlehurst, Cameron Politicians at War, July 1914 to May 1915 (London, 1971)
- Heindel, R.H. The American Impact on Great Britain 1898-1914 (Philadelphia, 1940)
- Lasswell, H.D. Propaganda Techniques in the World War (London, 1927)
- Lutz, Ralph, H. 'Studies of World War Propaganda 1914-1933' in Journal of Modern History, Vol.V, 1933, pp. 496-516
- Marett, Sir Robert Through the Back Door: An Inside View of British Overseas Information Service (London, 1948)
- Martin, Kingsley (or B.K.) The Triumph of Lord Palmerston, A Study of Public Opinion in England before the Crimean War (London, 1963, new and revised edition)
- Marwick, Arthur The Deluge (London, 1965)
- Masterman, Lucy C.F.G. Masterman, a biography (London, 1939)
- May, Ernest R. The World War and American Isolation 1914-1917 (Cambridge, Mass., 1959)
- Morison, Stanley 'Personality and Diplomacy in Anglo-American Relations', in Essays Presented to Sir Lewis Namier (eds. R. Pares and A.J.P. Taylor) (London, 1956), p.431.
- Musa, Faraj Diplomate Contemporaine Guide Bibliographique (Geneva, 1964)

- Nicolson, H. Diplomacy (London, 1963)
- Orwell George and Reynolds, Reginald British Pamphleteers, 2 vols. (London, 1948)
- Orwell, Sonia and Angus, Ian (eds.) The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, 4 vols. (London, 1968)
- Peterson, H.C. Propaganda for War: the Campaign Against American Neutrality 1914-17 (Norman, 1939)
- Ponsonby, Arthur Falsehood in War-Time, (London, 1928)
- Pound, Reginald Arnold Bennett (London, 1952)
- Pound, Reginald and Harmsworth, G. Northcliffe (London, 1959)
- Rappaport, Armin The British Press and Wilsonian Neutrality (London, 1951)
- Reid, James Morgan Atrocity Propaganda 1914-1919 (Yale, 1941)
- Renouvin, Pierre and Duroselle, Jean-Baptiste Introduction to the History of International Relations (translated by Mary Ilford) (London, 1968)
- Rogerson, S. Propaganda in the Next War (London, 1938)
- Roskill, Stephen Wentworth Hankey, Vol. I 1877-1918 (London, 1970)
- Rothwell, V.H. British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy 1914-18 (Oxford, 1971)
- Singleton-Gates, Peter and Girodias, Maurice The Black Diaries: The Life and Times of Roger Casement (Paris, 1959)
- Smith, J.B.A. John Buchan (London, 1965)
- Squires, James Duane British Propaganda at Home and in the United States from 1914 to 1917 (Cambridge, Mass., 1935)
- Steiner, Zara S. The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy 1898-1914 (Cambridge, 1969)
- Strang, Lord The Foreign Office, (London, 1955)
- Taylor, A.J.P. English History 1914-1945 (London, 1965)
- Taylor, H.A. Sir Robert Donald (London, 1934)
- Tilley, Sir Eohn and Gaselee, Sir Stephen The Foreign Office (London, 1937)
- Times, The History of the Times 1785-1841, Vol.IV (London, 1935)

- Trevelyan, G.M. Grey of Falloden (London, 1940)
- Tuchman, Barbara The Guns of August (London, 1962)
- Turner, Barry 'The Lusitania' in Purnell's History of the 20th Century, Vol. II (London, 1968) p.521 ff.
- Wanderscheck, Hermann Bibliographie zur Englischen Propaganda im Weltkrieg (Stuttgart, 1955), usually catalogued under Stuttgart (Weltkriegsbucherei), Heft. 7.
- Ward, A.J. Ireland and Anglo-American Relations, 1899-1921 (London, 1969)
- Webb, Marjorie Ogilvy The Government Explains: a Study of the Information Services (London, 1965)
- Williams, Lord Francis 'Propaganda 1914-15' in Purnell's History of the 20th Century, Vol. II (London, 1968), pp. 793-801.
- Wright, Quincy (ed.) Public Opinion and World Politics (Chicago, 1933)
- Zeman, Z.A.B. 'Propaganda and Subversion', in Purnell's History of the 20th Century, Vol. II (London, 1968), pp. 802-808
- " A Diplomatic History of the First World War (London, 1971)